

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you plan to
check out the
Flame Tree Arts
Festival this week?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE



SC Wildfire

South Carolina's biggest wildfire in more than three decades is a blaze that is four miles wide.

NATION...Page 10



Musical Echo

Is the musician in Jericho Rosales selling out?

MAHARLIKA...Page 15



Jay Leno checks into a hospital with an undisclosed illness and cancels taping of the "Tonight" show.

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Thousands grace opening of 28th Flame Tree Arts Festival

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thousands of spectators graced the opening rites of the four-day 28th Annual

Micronesian Flame Tree Arts Festival in Susupe Civic Center Thursday night.

With 55 traditional craft and visual artists from all over the Micronesia, 23 food vendors, seven live demonstrators for arts

and education workshops, as well as the collaboration of seven groups and agencies occupying the festival's information booths, the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs was unabashed in

declaring the opening a success.

The theme of this year's Micronesian Flame Tree Arts Festival is "Uniting Rainbows of Traditions and Cultures."

See THOUSANDS on Page 4

RYDLYME-GATE: A history

Editor's Note: The following is a timeline of the Rydlyme transactions, according to the indictment papers, and the succeeding trial.

1998-2000: James Santos and Timothy Villagomez, then CUC's executive director, ink a deal for CUC to buy thousands of gallons of Rydlyme. The deal gains Santos' ISLAS Micronesia Sales more than \$280,000, violates conflict of interest laws and circumvents procurement regulations, according to federal authorities. Most of the Rydlyme purchased is never used.

August 2007: Villagomez, now

See HISTORY on Page 4

GUILTY!

Jury finds Villagomez, Santos couple guilty

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After deliberating for less than six hours, federal jurors yesterday pronounced Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez, former Commerce Secretary James A. Santos, and Joaquina V. Santos guilty of all charges relating to a scheme to defraud the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. through needless purchases of a de-scaling chemical called Rydlyme.



This makes Villagomez the highest ever CNMI official to be convicted in a criminal case. He is the brother of Joaquina Santos, who is married to James Santos.

The jurors found Villagomez and James Santos guilty of conspiracy to defraud and to commit offenses against the U.S., wire fraud, theft concerning a program receiving

See GUILTY on Page 4

Over 1,000 lbs of WWII ordnance detonated

Onlookers watch
biggest detonation
ever since 2004

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Over 1,000 lbs of live World War II ordnance were detonated at the Laderan Laggun cliff line in Marpi at past 1pm yesterday, setting off a thunderclap that rebounded along the cliff's walls and sending a huge cloud of smoke into the still air.

See OVER on Page 4



Thick clouds billow over Laderan Laggun cliff line in Marpi at past 1pm yesterday as the Guam-based U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment in the Marianas, along with the CNMI Explosive Response Team, detonated over 1,000 lbs of live World War II ordnance. Inset, a National Geographic crewmember aims his camera as two explosives experts prepare the "button" to detonate the vintage ordnance.



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Local

Volunteers clean up Saipan lagoon, shore of litter

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Volunteers collected barbecue pits, soda and beer cans, plastic bottles and all other trash from the Saipan lagoon yesterday as part of the cleanup activities in April in observance of Environmental Awareness Month.

On the shoreline and beaches were much more trash—from cigarette butts to broken glasses, plastic spoons and forks, bottles, cans, plastics and other picnic stuff.

Carlos Ketebengang, Division of Environmental Quality coordinator for the lagoon cleanup, said over 35 volunteers

took part in the activity.

"There are 15 divers and those who are in the water, and

about 20 picking up trash on the shoreline...This has been a successful beach and lagoon clean-



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

up," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Besides DEQ, the other volunteers were from the Coastal Resources Management and the Bureau of Environmental Health.

The cleanup started from the Oleai Beach Bar and Grill beach to the 13 Fishermen Monument beach.

Evonne Sablan, an employee at BEH, said it's nice to help out in cleaning up the environment.

"This is my third trash bag," she said during an interview at the beach near the Quartermaster Road intersection. "We picked up mostly cigarette butts, candy wrappers and broken glasses," she added.

On April 17 and 18, an islandwide cleanup drew the participation of over 4,000 volunteers, highlighting the

observance of Environmental Awareness Month, led by DEQ, along with Beautify CNMI and partner agencies.

DEQ brigade sets cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at Marine Beach on Saturday, May 2, 2009, at 8am in Kagman.

Volunteers will split into groups, cleaning north and south of Makaka Beach until 10am, break for drinks, and then continue if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participat-

ed in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a green brigade t-shirt.

The DEQ cleanup brigade began in 1996 and continues to maintain clean, healthy beaches.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500. (*DEQ*)

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Senate fiscal panel starts work on FY'10 budget

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The chair of the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee is beginning work on the Fiscal Year 2010 budget.

By the time the budget proposal reaches the Legislature many things have changed, said Sen. Maria Pangelinan. The administration submitted its proposal to the Legislature on April 1.

The first step the senator is taking in the budget process is sending out letters to all department heads confirming employee num-

NMC Charter Day Committee extends deadline for vendors

The Northern Marianas College Charter Day Committee is inviting different agencies, businesses, clubs, and other civic organizations to participate in the upcoming Charter Day celebration.

Organizations may purchase booth space for the following categories: food/drink, specialty drinks (e.g. coffee coolers or pearl shakes), games booths, and retail (arts and crafts, toys, etc). The deadline to submit applications for booth spaces has been extended to Friday, May 1, 2009.

The Charter Day Celebration will be held on May 8, 2009, at the As Terlaje Campus from 4pm to 11pm. The event is one of NMC's largest and most-attended events.

Groups may reserve booth space by paying the \$100 one-time fee (which covers the tent booth and access to 110v electricity outlets). For more information, contact Perry Inos at 234-5498 ext. 1253 or email perryi@nmcnet.edu. (NMC)

bers. This holds the department accountable as well, she said, because once the budget passes the department head can't come back and lobby for changes.

"I always give them this opportunity to make sure we get this critical information so nobody is left out," she said.

By law the governor makes the budget projections and is the only person who can change the numbers, Pangelinan said.

"We can only question the projection, we cannot change it," she added.

In the April 1 budget proposal, Finance Secretary Eloy Inos said the Department of Finance estimates gross budgetary resources to reach \$162.82 million in Fiscal Year 2010, which runs from Oct. 1, 2009, to Sept. 30, 2010.

However, some \$4.65 million of this amount is earmarked for tobacco control, solid waste

management, and Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s debt to MPPLT. In addition, \$7.67 million will go to payment of debts.

The FY 2010 revenue estimate represents a net increase of \$2.416 million or 1.6 percent over the current mid-fiscal year estimate.

The total operating budget is \$159.06 million. Of that, \$8.56 million will come from non-general fund resources, like Compact Impact funds and expense transfers to certain special and revolving funds. The remaining balance of \$150.5 million will be funded through appropriations from the general fund.

If everyone agrees with the proposal, then the Legislature sets limits on expenditures by passing a House concurrent resolution by July 1. By Sept. 1, the Legislature completes action by introducing and passing

a budget bill, setting the spending ceiling.

The FY 2010 budget is a slight increase over the FY 2009 budget because the administration is anticipating a small boost from the U.S. economic stimulus funds.

In the budget proposal, the administration estimated the CNMI's general fund will see an additional \$15 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which will help

offset the loss of fees related to Public Law 110-229. The Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 extends U.S. immigrations laws to the CNMI beginning Nov. 28. This will mean a loss of \$7.6 million in labor and immigration fees and \$6.1 million in one-time transfers, for a total of \$13.7 million.

Rep. Ray Yumul, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said he is concerned about allocating the \$15 million when much of the stimulus funds have not yet

been received.

"What if the stimulus doesn't come in? What if there are delays?" the chairman asked, adding that there is also the possibility the CNMI may not comply with the grant terms and would be forced to return money that is already allocated.

Another important thing to consider is the Retirement Fund, Yumul said.

"Retirement is still on the top of my list, ensuring that is must be funded. They must receive their allocation," he added.

Garapan to sparkle for Golden Week holiday

Garapan. The trash cleanup will begin at 6am at the parking lot of American Memorial Park.

"We welcome all volunteers to join us in helping to maintain our reputation as a clean and healthy vacation destination," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio. "We especially want to make a good impres-

MVA is co-sponsoring the cleanup with Japan Saipan Travel Association and Korean Travel Association of Saipan. (MVA)

Conveniently located on Lower Navy Hill, 5-minute walk to Commonwealth Health Center. Newly renovated building with 3-bedroom 2 bathrooms. EPA approved solar water heaters. Free Wi-Fi. Rooftop deck facility for BBQ or Party. Air-condition in all bedrooms.

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Zoning Office NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

In our continued efforts to provide efficient and more improved services to the public, our office will be implementing an adjusted schedule of office operation on the following dates:

- April 29th , April 30th, and May 1st , 2009 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday): Office doors will be closed for permit processing
- May 4th thru May 8th , 2009 7:30am to 12:00pm - Office doors will open for servicing 12:00pm to 4:30pm - Office doors will close for processing

Thank you for your understanding and patience.

Zoning Staff & Management

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, May 07, 2009 at 5:30 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Bldg., Saipan

- A. Preliminary Matters
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
 4. Adoption of Minutes
 5. Communications
- B. Reports
 1. Chairman
 2. Secretary
 3. Treasurer
 4. Administrator
 5. Committees
 6. Legal Counsel
- C. Permits/ Applications and related actions: review and decide
 1. Conditional Use 2009-0959 JP International Trade Corporation
 2. Conditional Use 2009-0119 Marianas Bible Fellowship Center
- D. Old Business.
 1. Update on 2008-0302 LaoLao Bay Resort shoreline access progress report
 2. Discussion on hiring of Zoning Administrator
 3. Process for updating the Zoning Board regulations and Zoning Law
- E. New Business
 1. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment
- F. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with Legal Counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters
- G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Henry Hofsneider, Chairman

MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority, hereby gives notice that a Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 29, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the MVA Conference Room, San Jose Professional Building Saipan, MP 96950.

AGENDA

- 1) Preliminary Matters
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes
 - March 18, 2009
- 2) Public Comments
- 3) Committee Reports
 - a. Finance
 - b. Policy
 - c. Personnel
 - d. Ad Hoc Reports
- 4) Old Business
 - a. KSPN LLC Contract
- 5) New Business
 - a. Distribution of Additional Funds as per FY 2009 Budget
 - b. TA Summer Charter Support
 - c. Micronesia Australia Road Show
- 6) Executive Session
 - a. Personnel Matters
- 7) Adjournment

/s/ Jerry Tan
Chairman, MVA Board of Directors

OVER**From Page 1**

But after the “bird shot” meant to scare away the birds in the area about a mile north of the Marpi landfill, a military plane flew above the area.

During scheduled detonations, planes and road vehicles are not supposed to be driving by the area.

After the bird shot—which detonated 5 lbs of ordnance—came the major shot for the over 1,000 lbs of ordnance, all collected from a site in Marpi that was earlier thought to be developed into a homestead area.

Public Safety Commissioner San-

tiago Tudela pushed the button for the major detonation.

Over 30 adults and children, along with a visiting crew of the *National Geographic*, watched the detonation from atop Suicide Cliff.

Capt. Pete Leon Guerrero, commander of the CNMI Explosive Response Team, and AMPRO president John Scott separately said the 1,000 lbs was the largest volume to be detonated since 2004.

“There were 1,200 items and over 1,200 lbs of explosives. What makes this detonation unique is that all of them were U.S. Army artillery ammunition,” said Scott, adding that the pieces detonated included mostly artillery and howitzers, and some hand grenades.

Most of the detonated ordnance were retrieved from the Marpi area leading to Suicide Cliff starting on March 1.

“So in less than six weeks, we found over 1,000 lbs of explosives. Clearing of the site is still ongoing and we expect to retrieve more,” he said.

Scott added there will be two or three more detonations as they find more World War II unexploded ordnance, the first one by end-June or early July.

Two representatives from the U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal detachment in the Marianas, based on Guam, led the detonation with assistance from XRT, which is composed of Department of Public Safety police officers and Commonwealth Ports Au-

thority police.

Abigail Ruben, 20, of Garapan, went to Suicide Cliff just to witness the detonation.

“This is my first time,” she said. She was with five relatives, including the youngest spectator—a one-year-old girl.

DPS closed the Marpi area from 12pm to 3pm. The only area that was not closed off was Suicide Cliff, which was the main viewing point for the detonation. Public access to Suicide Cliff was allowed only through the road leading up to the Far East Broadcasting antenna for viewing purposes.

The site where all of the detonated ordnance were retrieved was an area used by the U.S. military immediately after the

capture of Saipan during World War II. It was used to store thousands of tons of ordnance for the impending invasion of the Japanese mainland.

In the 1950s, the U.S. Army attempted to dispose of the munitions by blowing them up in place, but it was only partly successful, leaving the area with unexploded ordnance, according to the biological assessment of the area.

In the 1960s, a cleanup operation was undertaken and 4,000 tons of hazardous materials were collected and disposed of. Conservative estimates say less than half the ordnance present was removed. Present ordnance includes projectiles, hand grenades and mortar rounds.

HISTORY**From Page 1**

the lieutenant governor, and Santos, now the Commerce Secretary, enlist the help of then CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero to win a sole source contract for the purchase of Rydlyme. The sale is conducted by Blue Pacific, a company owned by Joaquina Santos, and garners the Santoses an estimated \$120,000. Villagomez pressures Guerrero and CUC staff to fast-track the deal.

February 2008: Acting on a report from the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor, the Federal Bureau of Investigation begins examining the details of the sixth and final transaction in

the alleged scheme.

July 7, 2008: Villagomez returns from a conference in New York amid rumors he is under mounting pressure from federal investigators.

July 22, 2008: A federal grand jury hands down an indictment against Villagomez, Guerrero, James Santos and Joaquina Santos, charging them with wire fraud, theft of federal funds and conspiracy charges. The indictment is then sealed.

July 23, 2008: U.S. Marshall issues arrest warrants for the Santoses, Villagomez and Guerrero.

Aug. 8, 2008: Guerrero signs a plea deal with federal authorities, pledging cooperation with the case. He pleads guilty to one count of the indict-

ment, conspiracy, and is released pending trial on a \$10,000 bond.

Aug. 11, 2008: Villagomez and the Santos couple are arraigned and they plead not guilty. They are released on \$50,000 bonds.

Jan. 15, 2009: The U.S. government files additional charges against Villagomez and James and Joaquina Santos, adding bribery to the charges already faced by the three.

Jan. 16, 2009: Villagomez and the Santoses plead not guilty to the bribery and other charges.

Feb. 2, 2009: Rep. Tina Sablan calls for the creation of a committee to investigate whether there is cause to impeach Villagomez.

March 3, 2009: The federal

court determines that the indictment filed against Villagomez and his co-defendants “is sufficient.”

March 6, 2009: U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson summons 227 prospective jurors for the case.

March 31, 2009: The prosecution and the defense begin their opening arguments in the trial.

April 1, 2009: The U.S. government calls its first witness, Soc Nilo Villanueva, a former internal auditor of CUC, who said he wrote a report about finding some deviations in the purchase of thousands of gallons of Rydlyme.

April 6, 2009: The U.S. government files an amended witness list, saying it will call in 30 witnesses, while

Villagomez lists 23.

April 16, 2009: Trial enters 13th day with Guerrero taking the witness stand. Guerrero testified that Villagomez instructed him to double the number of barrels of Rydlyme being requested by the Power Division.

April 21, 2009: The prosecution rests its case, after Guerrero completed his testimony. The defense does not call any witnesses.

April 23, 2009: The prosecution and defense lawyers spend the whole day for closing arguments.

April 24, 2009: Jury renders a guilty verdict against Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, Commerce Secretary James Santos, and his wife Joaquina Santos on all counts.

GUILTY!**From Page 1**

federal funds, and bribery concerning a program receiving federal funds.

Joaquina Santos was found guilty of conspiracy to defraud and to commit offenses against the U.S., wire fraud, aiding and abetting to commit theft concerning a program receiving federal funds, and bribery concerning a program receiving federal funds.

The 12 jurors reached the unanimous verdict after deliberating for only a few hours. They began deliberations around 9:30am; the verdict was read at 3:30pm. Including the one-day jury selection, the trial lasted just 20 days.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson set the sentencing for July 28, 2009. After the sentencing, the defendants will have 10 days to file a notice of appeal. It was not immediately learned if Villagomez and the Santoses will appeal.

The maximum penalty for wire fraud is 20 years in prison, while the other counts range from five to 10 years.

Munson allowed the defendants to remain free pending their sentencing.

Reactions

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial had just two things to say after learning of the verdict:

“First, I want to express my sympathy to the family of the Lt. Governor. This is a terrible ordeal for any family to have to suffer, and I regret the great distress this unfortunate development has caused not only for the family, but for our entire local community as well.

“Second, as I have repeatedly said in the past, I respect the law and the judicial process. I respect our system of justice.”

Taotao Tano CNMI Inc. president Greg Cruz said his earlier call for Villagomez to step down from office would have been the honorable thing to do “for we knew that the evidence in this federal indictment outweighed the defense.”

“There is a lesson to be learned by all these and that is we the people of the Commonwealth can no longer remain silent on the corrupt and self-interest agenda that goes on in our homeland. Indeed this is a sad day for some, but a victory to the suffering, oppressed, and depressed consumers of [the] Commonwealth,” said Cruz.

Fast verdict

The fast verdict surprised even the prosecutor and caught the local media off-guard as no reporter was present

when the verdict was read.

Villagomez’s lead counsel, attorney David J. Lujan, was not in the courtroom as he reportedly flew to Guam, along with co-counsel, Leilani Lujan.

Tinian attorney Joey San Nicolas, co-counsel for Villagomez, was present when the verdict was announced. Ramon Quichocho and Victorino Torres, counsels for Joaquina Santos and James Santos, were also in the courtroom.

Saipan Tribune tried but failed to get comments from the defense lawyers.

Some family members, relatives, and friends of the defendants who were in the courtroom reportedly cried when the verdict was read.

The defendants were accused of conspiring to bilk the CNMI government out of thousands of dollars through business deals involving needless purchases of Rydlyme for CUC. The Santoses own ISLAS Micronesia Sales and Blue Pacific, which both supplied CUC with Rydlyme.

Villagomez allegedly accepted a \$15,000 check from the Santos couple in connection with CUC’s purchase of Rydlyme.

Former CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero, who was also charged with wire fraud, conspiracy, and theft

of federal funds, signed a plea agreement with the U.S. government and entered a guilty plea. As one of the key witnesses, Guerrero was the last person to take the witness stand.

Satisfied

In a news briefing after the verdict, Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric O’Malley said they are very satisfied with the result.

“We think that justice was served. The community stepped up and I think, as I said in my closing argument, decided that it was time...that enough was enough,” O’Malley said.

The prosecutor said it certainly took a lot of courage to do that, both on behalf of the U.S. government’s witnesses as well as the jurors.

“These are powerful people and it’s no easy thing to stand up and stay strong,” he said.

O’Malley admitted being surprised at the fast verdict.

“But it seems to me that the jurors, when they were asked if this, in fact, was their verdict, they all seemed very confident and so I think the strength of the testimony, especially the employees of CUC, gave the jurors the courage [to come out with the guilty verdict],” O’Malley said.

O’Malley said the verdict hope-

fully means that people in the CNMI shouldn’t be afraid to come forward because someone will listen to them if they think that someone is doing something wrong.

“And if there’s something there, we are going to look into it,” O’Malley promised.

He praised the Office of the Public Auditor because “it is where the case started.”

“They are cooperating and working with us and helping us with the investigation all along. And if people have concerns, we will listen,” he said.

U.S. Attorney Leonardo Rapadas said that yesterday was the culmination of a very stressful several weeks for their office. He said the guilty verdict is a very important case not only for the U.S. Attorney District, but for the United States as well.

“Government corruption has always been high on the priority list for the Department of Justice. And it is sad to see that in small areas like CNMI we have government corruption that has reached into the highest levels,” he said.

Rapadas said the primary agency that worked on the case was the FBI, with the help of OPA and some assistance from the Office of the Attorney General and Internal Revenue Service.

tional food from the island of Chuuk.

For storyboard carving, artist Poland Yamada will provide a demonstration, while pandanas weaving will be performed by Flowerpot Salas. Arisa Sakai Peters will take care of the origami demonstration, while Philip B. Quitugua will take the lead in coconut candy. Coconut leaf weaving will be presented by Julie Seman.

DCCA has confirmed five participants in the float competition: Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, San Antonio Elementary School, Kagman Elementary School, Ladera International School of Saipan, and Eusebio Borja and family.

THOUSANDS**From Page 1**

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial kicked off the traditional festivities Thursday with a soft opening at 10am that welcomed Yap Gov. Sebastian L. Anef and the master navigators and canoe voyagers from the Republic of Palau and Satawal.

In her opening remarks, Arts Council executive director Ramona Rebue nog expressed satisfaction in seeing the “traditional success” of the festivities despite the changing economic climate.

She described the event as a congregation of fascinating customs and tradi-

tions, vital in the preservation of one’s individuality.

DCCA Secretary Cecilia T. Celes said it is the festival’s objective to bring the Micronesian region together and celebrate its rich cultures and history.

The department dedicated this year’s occasion to seven notable local artists from Saipan, Rota, and Tinian.

Posthumous awards were handed to the family of local healer Monica Cruz Lizama, master sand painter Albert S. Toves Jr., educator and traditional art work demonstrator Juan Q. Kapileo, local coconut carver and artist Danny D. Babauta, local musician Francisco M. Pangelinan, wood carver Manuel L.

Dela Cruz, and traditional dance demonstrator Hal Basilio O. Taitano.

Special acknowledgment through gift presentations were also provided to the event’s sponsors and the delegations from Guam, Palau, Yap, Rota, and Tinian.

DCCA also honored Capt. Camillo Erakmai, Capt. Sesario Sewralur, and Capt. Tobias Urupoa, along with their crew members. They are the master navigators of the visiting canoes that sailed all the way from Satawal and Palau to Saipan using traditional navigation methods.

Special performances were also provided to viewers by the Satawal dancers, Kulu Natibu/Inatua Cultural

dancers, Welippal Cultural Dancers, Guam’s Rasan Acho’ Latte Dancers, Gilita, and Nolas Kaliga performers.

Unique demonstrations, float competition

Starting today, seven special demonstrations are expected to draw a large crowd, including the much-awaited sakau demonstration to be performed by Nick Benjamin. Sakau is a relaxing drink, a kava-like brew from Pohnpei. Its pepper plant root is pounded and mixed with water to form an earthy paste drink that is used for special ceremonies in Pohnpei.

Local artist Lusiano Saimon, meantime will demonstrate “Kkol”—a tradi-

Fitial: CNMI to see stimulus money next month

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Stimulus money should start flowing into the Commonwealth in May or June, according to Gov. Benigno Fitial.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the CNMI is going to receive

close to \$100 million in formula grants. The government has been receiving notices of these funds for the last few months.

The money should actually start arriving to the CNMI in the next few months, the governor said earlier this week.

The stimulus team, led by Commerce Secretary Mike Ada,

has been preparing competitive grant applications and recently submitted the first application for the Community Oriented Policing Services grant, which will provide money for the Department of Public Safety to hire additional law enforcement.

At a news briefing this week, Fitial reiterated his earlier prom-

ise that money from the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds grant will help cover payroll for furloughed government employees.

"The plan is, because of the overridden budget veto, I won't have enough money to keep everyone on the payroll throughout the fiscal year, so I have no choice but to remove some peo-

ple from the payroll," he said. "However, the plan with the stimulus is to bring those people that I furloughed, because you know there is no money locally, back into the payroll."

The administration had originally planned on using all the \$8 million in discretionary money for payroll, but last week Esther

Fleming of the Office of Management and Budget said government officials are now planning on reserving approximately \$5 million for the Department of Public Health's Medical Referral Office. The MRO has seen a spike in numbers but was only budgeted for \$5,172 for non-personnel costs in Fiscal Year 2009.

Now the plan is to allocate majority of the money to DPH and use the remaining \$3 million to cover employee payroll.

balance of their unpaid employer contribution, if any, each quarter.

Retirees want the government to pay its estimated \$6 million monthly employer contribution to the Fund, fearing the pension system would go broke in just a few years if it doesn't get payments due it.

The Commonwealth Association of Retired Persons and the NMI Retirement Fund administration and board of trustees share the same concern about the pension system's financial health.

Penalty sought for Finance chief's failure to remit Fund contributions

By KRISTI EATON
Kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Another lawmaker has introduced a bill that would impose a penalty for failure to remit money into the Retirement Fund.

Under House Bill 16-239, the Finance Secretary would be held personally liable for failure to remit the 11 percent rate to the Retirement Fund.

"The Legislature finds that P.L. 16-32 amended P.L. 15-126 and in doing so, reduced the employer contribution to 11 (percent) from 18 (percent). This amendment however, did not include a requirement that the Secretary of Finance actually remit the amount contributed by the employer to the Retirement Fund. Although this remittance is implied, the instant amendment is necessary to ensure that the Secretary is expressly required by operation of law to remit the 11 (percent) employer contribution," the bill stated.

The bill, authored by Vice-Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero, forces the Finance Secretary to pay any and all amounts due to the Retirement Fund that are not remitted. In addition to the principal, the penalty for not making the required contributed amounts on time is payment of the principal with interest at a rate of 33 percent.

If passed, the law would be retroactive to Oct. 1, 2008.

Rep. Ray N. Yumul, chairman of the NMI Retirement Fund Working Group, introduced House Bill 16-236, which would make any person who fails to pay or remit contributions to the Fund guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction may be fined not more than \$2,000 and imprisoned for not more than a year.

"Any government employee shall have a cause of action against the Secretary of Finance or head of each autonomous agency or public corporation for

the failure to remit the employer's contribution and recovery of any unpaid employer contribution," the bill stated.

Yumul, who is also chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, said the government's failure to remit its employer contributions to the Fund created a financial dilemma that resulted in the Fund liquidating its assets to pay retirees their pensions.

The Fund's investment portfolio has since decreased due to the liquidation of assets and investment market decline.

Introduced on March 30, H.B. 16-236 states that the Fund's total assets are only at \$267 million, which is much less than its all-time high of \$540 million a few years ago.

The government has repeatedly failed to remit its employer contributions as required by law.

"The purpose of this legislation is to establish a criminal penalty and cause of action against a person charged with

the responsibility of remitting employer contributions to the Fund but fails to make such remittance, and to require the secretary of Finance and heads of autonomous agencies and public corporations shall remit their employer's contribution concurrently with the employee's contribution within five working days following the end of each payroll date.

As of March 31, the CNMI government owes the Fund over

\$196 million in employer contributions.

Under Yumul's bill, the Finance Secretary and heads of autonomous agencies and public corporations shall remit their employer's contribution concurrently with the employee's contribution within five working days following the end of each payroll date.

They are also required to notify employees in writing of the

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp



REVISED NOTICE TO THE BANKS/LENDING INSTITUTIONS

Solicitation for Listing and Purchase of Bank-Owned Abandoned and/or Foreclosed Homes/Residential Properties with Marketable Title
(Title Marketability to be solely determined by NMHC).

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds).

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) through its Board of Directors, is seeking to purchase five properties with \$364,162 of bank-owned Abandoned and/or Foreclosed Homes/Residential Properties with Marketable Title (title marketability to be solely determined by NMHC) located in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands—the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Preference will be given to the banks/lending institutions, who upon NMHC's acquisition and rehabilitation of properties, willing to finance credit-worthy borrowers purchasing the property from NMHC.

According to HUD's definition, a home is "abandoned" when mortgage or tax foreclosure proceedings have been initiated for that property, no mortgage or tax payments have been made by the property owner for at least 90 days AND the property has been vacant for at least 90 days. Moreover, a property has been "foreclosed upon" at the point that, under state or local law, the mortgage or tax foreclosure is complete. HUD will generally not consider a foreclosure to be complete until after the title for the property has been transferred from the former homeowner under some type foreclosure proceeding or transfer in lieu of foreclosure, in accordance with state or local law.

NMHC will be using funds allocated through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). The NSP will provide emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities. The NSP provides grants to every state and certain local communities to purchase foreclosed or abandoned homes and to rehabilitate, resell, or redevelop these homes in order to stabilize neighborhoods and stem the decline of home values of neighboring homes. The program is authorized under Title III of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. (<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg/>)

- NMHC is seeking for a listing and purchase(s) from the bank as to how many abandoned and/or foreclosed homes/residential properties they are able to sell for \$364,162.
- NMHC will acquire the bank-owned abandoned and/or foreclosed homes/residential properties at 70% of its appraised value.
- As part of the transaction, it is NMHC's desire to coordinate with the banks, upon NMHC's completed rehabilitation of the properties, to resell to low/moderate/middle income families as defined by HUD's 2009 Adjusted Home Income Limits.
- Pursuant to NSP requirements, NMHC will ensure that 25%, or \$91,040.00, of the total Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds (\$364,162.00) be made available to qualified borrowers with an income less than 50% of area median income in order to finance individuals whose income is between 50%-120% of area median income.

For the properties the banks propose to sell to NMHC, the bank shall include the following information:

- Appraisal value of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties. (Appraisal report must be within 6 months of acquisition by NMHC)
- Location (by village) of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties
- Detailed description of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties, including photographs of the homes/residential properties
- Date the foreclosed/abandoned home/residential property was built
- Date of the foreclosure
- Principal amount owed for the foreclosed/abandoned home or residential property
- Compounded interest owed until the date the bank discontinued charging interest
- The listing provided by the bank must adhere to the following format:
 - Font style: Times New Roman, 12 point font, black color ink
 - Heading: Saipan, Tinian, and Rota (islands)
 - Subheadings: Villages, in alphabetical order

Interested banks/lending institutions must bring the complete listing to the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, on Thursday, May 21, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. The NMHC will be conducting a meeting with the banks at the aforementioned time and date to address any questions and concerns. Details of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program will also be provided at the meeting.

Preference will be given to the banks/lending institutions, who upon NMHC's acquisition and rehabilitation of properties, willing to finance credit-worthy borrowers purchasing the property from NMHC.

/s/
JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Public Lands

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Office of the Governor, in cooperation with the Department of Public Lands ("DPL") and the Office of the Mayor of Tinian, hereby notifies all Tinian Village Homestead applicants that the DPL will conduct a lottery drawing of homestead lots on Thursday, April 30th at 9:30 A.M. at the Tinian Youth Center.

All applicants are required to bring a valid proof of identification. An applicant unable to be present on the date and time of the drawing may be allowed to participate in the drawing by appointing a duly authorized representative. Such representative is required to bring a valid proof of identification of himself/herself and that of the non-appearing applicant. A representative must also present a valid proof of express delegation of authority to participate in the drawing on behalf of the non-appearing applicant.

All applicants are advised to be on time.

/s/ JOHN S. DELROSARIO, JR.
Secretary, Department of Public Lands

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Trade backsliding

One of the many dangers of the global economic downturn is that it could cause countries to turn inward, with even the best of free-trade sentiments replaced by protectionist tendencies. Some taxpayers—understandably, perhaps, but mistakenly—believe that only money spent within their country's borders helps to expand their domestic economies. Thus, political pressure to circumvent or walk away from international trade standards mounts.

We have seen this with the “Buy American” provisions initially stuck into the stimulus bill, which President Obama wisely persuaded the Senate to alter, as well as restrictions on the operation of Mexican trucks in the United States. We are seeing evidence of this creeping protectionism around the world, as well. In its recent effort to “name and shame,” the World Trade Organization published a long list of countries that have made counterproductive trade changes ranging from providing direct aid to sectors of their economies, such as autos, footwear and steel, to manipulating tariffs. In looking at instances of protectionism since November’s Group of 20 meetings, the World Bank found that 17 of the 20 members, all of whom signed on to the group’s communiques pledging to avoid protectionism, have adopting measures restricting trade.

The good news is that trade infractions have not yet begun to do major economic damage. As the WTO report says, “There is no indication of an imminent descent into high-intensity protectionism, involving widespread resort to trade restrictions and retaliation.” Moreover, some violations that would be viewed as outrageously anti-competitive in normal times, such as aid to a country’s financial sector, are a necessary evil right now. The risk, however, is that even protectionism that might help to achieve short-term economic goals could set off retaliatory measures. Canada, for instance, has responded to the U.S. auto bailout by taking actions to subsidize its own auto industry. Mexico has responded to U.S. truck restrictions by slapping new tariffs on U.S. exports. Even Paraguay has a “Buy Paraguayan” policy.

Already, the WTO estimates that exports will drop a dramatic 9 percent worldwide this year. Further protectionist measures would cause even greater deterioration, making global economic recovery more difficult. Dollars that flow from the United States to other countries, for instance, help to create greater demand for U.S. exports. Reduced opportunities for trade push up prices for consumers, here and elsewhere. One of the keys to coming out of this global slowdown will be keeping the channels of free trade open, not backsliding into a downward protectionist spiral.

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More funds sought for Kagman watershed, Garapan market

By GREGORIO C. SABLAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following is the text of the statement that CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan delivered as testimony before the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food And Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations on April 22, 2009

I come here today to join Ms. Bordallo, and on behalf of our colleagues from the territories, to highlight our joint requests for appropriations by the Committee for the resident instruction, facilities and equipment, and distance education grants programs that are authorized by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 for the land grant institutions located in the territories. These programs are generally referred to as the “insular programs,” and are an important means through which the United States Department of Agriculture can help address the unique and growing needs of this set of underserved, underdeveloped, minority-serving institutions. Each of these institutions are accredited American schools with programs and majors established in the agricultural, food and animal sciences. I want to echo the sentiments expressed by my colleague from Guam and in particular this morning provide you with a general overview of the nature and state of farming in the islands, in addition to focusing on the facilities and equipment program request.

Before turning to these land grant program requests, however, I also want to speak to two of my priority project requests: the Kagman Watershed and Garapan Public Market.

Since 1993—almost 16 years—the Natural Resources Conservation Services has been working on the Kagman Watershed Project on the island of Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands. The watershed project is authorized for federal assistance under the Watershed Protection and Flood Protection Act (P.L. 83-566) and is administered by the NRCS under an agreement signed on Nov. 4, 1993.

The purpose of the project is to reduce flooding of agricultural land and public roads by collecting runoff from the mountainside above the Kagman peninsula. The water is to be collected in a reser-

voir and then distributed to farmers on the peninsula for irrigation. The 3,750 acre Kagman peninsula has what has been described by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the richest agriculture soils in the Marianas, reaching a depth of 16 feet.

The area is intensely farmed for vegetables. When completed, the project will increase Saipan’s production of these crops, which are otherwise imported, control flooding of agricultural lands, lessen agricultural demands for water from ground aquifers, and decrease flooding on main roads. But the project has dragged on for years, moving by fits and starts as funds are available. It’s time to finish what the federal government began in 1993. The money I am requesting will allow the project to move forward with construction of 70 million gallon reservoir, a sediment basin, pumps, and transfer pipelines—finally getting water to the farmers who need it.

In addition, I am requesting funds for the Garapan Public Market. Here in Washington, DC, there is the Eastern Market. In many other states, neighborhood markets become an important part of that community for various reasons including commerce. However, Saipan is lacking a centralized public market that can provide fresh produce and seafood to the community. There are a great number of commercial fishermen and commercial farmers on island, but there is no centralized facility that can accommodate the two industries. This market will provide essential infrastructure, such as permanent building facility with running water and electricity that can allow farmers and fishermen to provide freshly-made and prepared food on a daily basis. Perhaps it can evolve into something as wonderful as the Eastern Market that includes art and crafts displays.

The public market will greatly enhance the sales and marketing of all participating farmers and fishermen and it will also provide the community a reliable and dependable source of fresh produce and seafood. The design and engineering of the proposed building structure has already been completed and only the construction and equipment installation phases will need funding.

Apart from this project request, is the three program requests I referenced at the start of my testimony. Our land grant institutions in the territories specialize in tropical and subtropical agriculture research and instruction, including in the areas of aqua-

See MORE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

Suspensions in public high schools

There was an article in the *Saipan Tribune* on April 23, 2009, about suspension rates of public schools in the CNMI. Marianas High School was at the top of the list with the highest number of suspensions in SY 2006-2007, followed by Saipan Southern High and Kagman High School. Marianas High School had a total of 955 suspensions, while Saipan Southern High School had 164 and Kagman High School had 160 suspensions. Mr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero explained that school administrators should "exhaust" the school rules first before automatically suspending students.

As a senior at Marianas High School, I for one can say that my school has zero tolerance for chewing betel nut and tobacco possession on school grounds. I am not aware of the regulations established at Saipan Southern High and Kagman High School; however, MHS follows the BOE policy 2606, which states, "The discipline regulations for suspension and expulsion are intended to supplement standard day-to-day disciplinary actions taken at

the school level."

In SY 2007-2008, the highest suspension rate was at SSHS. SSHS had a total of 1,784 cases, followed by MHS with 676, and KHS with 227. The suspension rates of SSHS increased dramatically. Was it because of the incoming freshmen? Or was the school staff exhausting the rules in SY 2006-2007 like Mr. Deleon Guerrero says they should?

Mr. Deleon Guerrero also explained that instead of automatically suspending students, students should go through counseling sessions, pick up trash around campus, or have parent conferences. At MHS, when a student is caught chewing betel nut or is absent or tardy numerous times, he or she receives either a warning, does work detail, has a parent conference with the vice principal for discipline, and if necessary, faces suspension.

Many people would feel insecure about this poll, especially those parents with children attending MHS. Is Mr. Deleon Guer-

ro saying that school administrators and staff should be more lenient when it comes to punishments? I disagree. I would rather attend a school with a high number of suspension rates than a school that allows students to get away with delinquency with regards to regulations. At least I know at MHS, the school administrators and staff are actually doing their jobs. They ensure that students do not loiter around campus during class time, counselors keep up with their respective students, and staff calls home if a student is absent to confirm the student is at home. At least now I can feel safe knowing that our school administrators and staff are not abusing their power, but instead using their power to do what they can to ensure the safety and well-being of the students.

DLGuerrero, Venetia

Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

to do service for the community and they're not doing it.

I told the Park and Recreation staff last week that if the broken BBQ grill isn't removed, I would go public with this. I want the people to know this sort of thing will not happen on my watch. We the people deserve better from government employees. I don't mean all government employees but some departments need to remember that the government work for the people.

If you ask government employees who they work for, nine out of 10 would say they work for the government. But if you ask them who the government works for, it would take time for them to answer. The government works for the people. Don't forget that.

With all that said and done, I want that Kagman resident to know I am trying to get that grill removed like I said I would.

Willie L. Brundidge

via e-mail



WILLIE L. BRUNDIDGE
A broken barbecue grill leans on the wall of an unmaintained and graffiti-ridden restroom at the Kagman II playground.

Falling on deaf ears

As you know, I'm running for congressman of Precinct 5, which includes all of Kagman, half of Papago, San Vicente, Kannat Tabla and about a third of Santa Lourdes.

As a candidate, I go around to meet the residents. One resident living near the Kagman II playground told me the playground equipment is unsafe. He also wanted someone from the government to remove a broken barbecue grill in the playground because it's dangerous for kids. I told the resident I would call CNMI Parks and Recreation to remove the grill. That's two weeks ago.

I've called the Parks and Recreation office three times to ask them to remove the broken barbecue grill pit from the playground. As of April 13, no one has removed the grill. Last week, a staff member at Parks and Recreation told me that the director is on leave but they would forward the information to the acting director.

I have no idea what happened after that. This is an example of what's going on in the CNMI government. People are getting paid

Sorry condition of the Retirement Fund

I read Sen. Frica Pangelinan's comments and response regarding the Retirement Fund with sadness. Sadness about the sorry condition of the retirement program. What started out as a program to provide for the best retirement plan in the world is now near bankruptcy. It is my understanding that the CNMI elected to not participate in the U.S. Social Security, as it was feared that it would go bankrupt. The CNMI retirement program on the other hand cannot go bankrupt. Why did the CNMI think so?

I believe the reason for why the retirement program is what it is now is the very generous benefits as enacted by the Legislature. There was a period when to ensure re-election, a law would be enacted increasing the benefits. So what is the CNMI to do now to improve the condition of the retirement program? Senator Pangelinan mentioned several options, including property tax. I know this is an unpopular topic. Yet we need to seriously consider it. Land is what we have. It can provide for a stable tax base, which the CNMI lacks.

MORE

From Page 6

culture and food and nutrition. Agriculture has remained a stable sector of our economies in the islands for decades and farming is a traditional part of our cultures. There is subsistence farming and a growing export market, especially with respect to specialty crops. Today, our farmers in the islands are harvesting many traditional and tropical fruits, nuts, and horticultural specialties. Among these are avocados, bananas, beans, betel nuts, breadfruits, coconuts, cucumbers, grapefruit, guavas, limes and lemons, mangoes, oranges, papayas, peppers, pineapples, squash, sweetsops, tangerines, tomatoes, and watermelons, and several others. There are also ongoing efforts to develop a market for shrimp and tilapia aquaculture as Ms. Bordallo mentioned.

Overall, our farmers are increasingly focused on food safety and in advancing the competitiveness of their products and access into the local and federal marketplace on our islands. In the Marianas, our farmers are working to gain a stronger foothold in supplying the school lunch and breakfast programs, the commissaries and exchanges, and the fleet of Naval and military prepositioned vessels that make port calls on Guam and in Saipan. There are also local farmers markets and the hotels and restaurants to supply that are the foundation of our tourism industry. In this regard, strengthening the

We are faced with not only uncertainties; we have no concrete solutions to our problems. The government needs to be reformed. It needs to be downsized. It needs to be run efficiently by having its employees multi-task and perform their work with passion. Having a job is not a right; it is a privilege. It should be based on performance. After all it is the taxpayers' money (yours and mine) that pays for their salaries.

Whose fault is it that the Retirement Fund is in this predicament? It is our fault as we continue to allow ourselves to be fooled election year after election year. I would think that 25 years is enough time for all of us to have grown and to be able to think for ourselves. Let us show our maturity this coming election. I am repeating what I have said earlier: Vote intelligently. Vote with conscience. Vote for the future including for the sake of your loved ones.

Efrain F. Camacho

Navy Hill, Saipan

extension component of our land grant institutions is critical.

While our institutions have only been a part of the land grant college system since 1972, they must compete with larger, more resourced 1862 institutions in competing for limited national programs. The farm bill authorized programs for which we have requested appropriations and that are targeted to the territorial or insular institutions are meant to provide a means by which our unique needs can be addressed. They are designed to be competitive, and are structured as similar support mechanisms that are already provided to the 1890 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and the 1994 Tribal Colleges. Our institutions in the territories have similar needs, particularly with respect to facilities and equipment. Our laboratories are in disrepair and the equipment being used by professors and students is outdated. Each of our institutions have identified a top priority infrastructure need if the facilities and equipment program were to receive appropriations, as we have requested, in fiscal year 2010.

The Northern Marianas College has identified a need of \$850,000 to upgrade its aquaculture research and demonstration facility and community kitchen. Plans for this facility are to host production methods for tilapia, grouper and abalone, and its current operations are limited. American Samoa Community College is in need of \$700,000 to support its \$1.8 million construction of a planned nutrition, exercise and community wellness research center, and

the University of the Virgin Islands is in need of replacing its farm equipment at its experiment research stations. The University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez is in need of at least \$950,000 to rebuild its classroom facility which was constructed in 1952.

Maintaining equipment and constructing facilities in the islands is especially expensive due to the cost of shipping materials and accounting for climate considerations. Materials can corrode more quickly and easily under harsh conditions and the seawater oxidation processes. Building codes are also stringent to withstand earthquakes and typhoons.

It is for these reasons that we hope this Subcommittee will act favorably upon our requests and not only include and increase an appropriation this year for the resident instruction grants program, but also commit seed money, if not at the fully authorized level of \$8 million, at some amount to begin the facilities and equipment grants program. We know the 1890 and 1994 communities have specific programs to address their infrastructure and equipment needs. These programs are working successfully for those sets of institutions; however, we hope the disproportionate levels of funding historically received by the institutions in the territories could begin to be addressed through appropriations to the three programs we have addressed in our testimonies today.

We recognize you have a challenging process to manage, and we are grateful for your time and attention. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Letter of apology

Dear people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration: I write this letter to apologize for having committed the crime of document fraud against the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration, on March 26, 2008.

I realize that what I did was wrong and it brought shame to me and my family. I committed this crime for my own selfish reason.

My mistake has caused me to experience difficulties and hardship. I went to jail for three days, had to pay \$625 in fines, and I am now serving a one-year probation for the offense of document fraud.

I am currently looking for a job in order that I may start a new life, and be a contributing member of the community. I have learned from my mistake. I will do all that I can from hereon to be a better person. I am extremely remorseful for the wrong that I have done, and I promise that it will not happen again.

Once again, please forgive me for the shameful thing that I have done.

Teresita Deleon Guerrero

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲ 86 ▼ 75
Palau	Rain	▲ 87 ▼ 78
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 88 ▼ 77
Pohnpei	Rain	▲ 85 ▼ 77
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲ 90 ▼ 78
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲ 66 ▼ 61
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲ 68 ▼ 47
Hong Kong	Rain	▲ 81 ▼ 70
Honolulu	Showers	▲ 77 ▼ 67
London	Showers	▲ 61 ▼ 41
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲ 70 ▼ 54
Manila	Rain	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Melbourne	Showers	▲ 64 ▼ 55
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲ 81 ▼ 70
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲ 85 ▼ 63
Osaka	Rain	▲ 70 ▼ 51
Paris	Rain	▲ 59 ▼ 47
Pusan	Rain	▲ 61 ▼ 47
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲ 70 ▼ 53
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲ 60 ▼ 36
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲ 58 ▼ 48
Seoul	Rain	▲ 55 ▼ 42
Tokyo	Rain	▲ 62 ▼ 57
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲ 84 ▼ 62

Tides

Sunrise/Sunset

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:57 AM	6:33 PM	Today	5:34 AM	6:40 PM
Sunday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM	Sunday	6:22 AM	7:43 PM
Monday	5:56 AM	6:34 PM	Monday	7:17 AM	8:48 PM
Tuesday	5:55 AM	6:34 PM	Tuesday	8:17 AM	9:52 PM
Wednesday	5:55 AM	6:34 PM	Wednesday	9:21 AM	10:53 PM

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ISLAND SNAPSHOT

Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

TRAVELOGUE

Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan.

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597 11:50am 12:25pm 1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily
CO9318 8:30am 9:20am Daily
CO9597 11:50am 1:20pm 1,7 via Rota
CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6
CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily
CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily
CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099 5:00am 7:35am Daily
NW 078 8:20am 1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075 4:55pm 7:30pm Daily

Guam-Narita

NW 73 4:10pm 7:00pm Daily
NW 81 3:55pm 6:55pm Daily

Saipan-Osaka

OZ 119 4:00am 6:40am 1,4,6

Guam-Osaka

NW 79 4:45pm 7:35pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:20am 11:05am Daily

Guam-Nagoya

NW 23 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1
OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119 4:00am 11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606 3:20pm 7:00pm Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:20am 6:50am 1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844 2:50am 5:40am 2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1,7

Guam-Palau

CO 953 7:40pm 8:40pm 1,7
CO 893 5:50pm 6:50pm 3,5

Palau-Manila

CO 893 7:35pm 9:10pm 3,5

Guam-Manila

CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 3,5 via Koror
CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily
PR 111 6:00am 7:50am 1,2,4,6,7

Nagoya-Manila

NW 71 8:40pm 11:55pm Daily

Incheon-Hongkong

OZ 721 9:20am 12:00pm Daily
OZ 723 7:45pm 10:35pm Daily
OZ 7173 8:00pm 10:50pm 5,7

Narita-Manila

NW 1 7:00pm 10:55pm Daily

Manila-Nagoya

NW 72 6:30am 11:05am Daily

Hongkong-Incheon

OZ 724 12:30am 4:50am Daily
OZ 7183 12:45am 5:05am 1,4,6

OZ 722 1:30pm 5:45pm Daily

Manila-Narita

NW 2 7:45am 12:40pm Daily

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ET
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Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral

Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center

Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish

Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish

Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish

Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota

Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleal) Parish

Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish

Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish

Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios

Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad

Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan

Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm

Saturday Tagalog Service: 8:10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10:11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7:30pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan

Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan

Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan

Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm

Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan

Worship Service: 9am
GBC Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am

Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan

Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)

Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)

Sunday: 6:45am (English)

Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church

Koblerville
Sunday Services 9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158

Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)

Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal

8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

APRIL 25, 2000

Another jailbreak

Police have launched a massive manhunt for the arrest of convicted felons Jesse James B. Camacho, 20, and Kurt M. Taisacan, 22,—two of the three inmates who bolted out of prison at around 9:40 p.m. Sunday. The third escapee, Luis Deleon Guerrero Camacho, 51, was apprehended by the police in Finasatu, four hours after he fled the prison. Maj. Clyde Norita asked the public to take precautionary measures as the escapees are considered armed and dangerous. He said DPS has also provided security to the victims and their families, regularly checking on them while the convicts are on the loose.

Kiyu sees poll victory in team-up with Pepero

Senate Vice President Thomas P. Villagomez expressed confidence yesterday over winning the Republican primary, saying his team-up with Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan assures victory for GOP in next year's elections. "We're going to work for it. I feel that with my record, along with Pepero's record, we're going to make a better team," he told in an interview, his first since Mr. Sablan announced his running mate two weeks ago. The Pepero-Kiyu ticket is expected to face the team of CNMI representative to Washington Juan N. Babauta and Rep. Diego T. Benavente in the Republican primary to be held later or early next year.

APRIL 25, 2001

Juvenile offenders increasing

The Division of Youth Services yesterday reported an alarming increase in the number of juvenile delinquents in the Northern Marianas, with Hopwood Junior High School students topping the list of young offenders. At least 50 percent or about 54 of the 101 offenses committed by CNMI youths for the month of March alone were reported among Hopwood students; 37 of which were truancy while 17 were for alleged possession of controlled substance. The alarming truancy cases was reported even as students are regularly being picked up and dropped by school buses between the school and their residence, according to DYS Juvenile Probation Unit Supervisor Sylvio Ada Jr.

Taiwanese investors show interest in NMI

A group of Taiwanese investors has signified intentions to infuse fresh capital into the Northern Marianas by venturing into computer software and furniture production, a development enticed by recently-enacted investment incentives law. Free Trade Zone Authority Chair Karl Reyes met with Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Director-General Leo Chen-Jan Lee last week where possible business ventures by Taiwanese investors into the CNMI were discussed. The FTZA met with the Taiwanese trade delegation last April 16 at the Department of Commerce to tackle business opportunities at the proposed free trade zones in the Commonwealth.

APRIL 25, 2002

DOLI: No fee to get ATB

Applications for Authorization to Board letters are not for a fee.

Labor and Immigration Secretary Joaquin A. Tenorio said this, confirming that he received a complaint alleging that there were fixers charging a fee in exchange for facilitating ATB applications. As this developed, Philippine Consul General Julia Heidemann echoed the reminder that ATBs are not for a fee, saying that based on the complaint she learned from a meeting with Tenorio, the fixers have been charging as much as \$120. "The ATB is free. According to the Secretary, he has heard that some people are asking for fee to facilitate the ATB," Heidemann said. "The Secretary said no. There's no fee for ATB, and they need not look for people to facilitate. Discourage fixers; it's not good for the administration to have."

First 100 days: A humbling experience

The Babauta administration marked its first 100 days in office last Tuesday, with Gov. Juan N. Babauta saying that, beyond the specific problems and issues facing his administration, what he considers the biggest challenge for his government is changing the attitude of the community. "To work together, to pull our resources together and to lessen the acrimonious relationship that have gone through between the administration and the Legislature in the past, which are things that slow us down," Babauta said. With the rest of his term before him, Babauta told reporters this is a much bigger challenge that he and Lt. Governor Diego Benavente would be working on.

Business

Chrysler's fate rests with its debtors as clock ticks

NEW YORK (AP)—With a government deadline just seven days away, Chrysler LLC is running out of time to work out deals with debtholders, its unions and a foreign partner.

A life outside of bankruptcy appears to hinge on whether Chrysler and the U.S. government can get the company's lenders to forgive a large portion of the company's debt in exchange for stock. But both sides are far apart.

"I've said this is the equivalent of a 70-yard field goal," Michael Robinet, vice president of global vehicle forecasts at CSM Worldwide, said of Chrysler meeting all its obligations in the next seven days.

Analysts have said all other negotiations hang on that deal. However, The New York Times reported Thursday that the Treasury Department is preparing a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing for Chrysler, under which the pensions and retiree health care benefits of the United Auto Workers union would be protected. The company would pursue a deal with Italian automaker Fiat SpA while under bankruptcy protection. The lender issue

Chrysler has been living on \$4 billion in government aid since the beginning of the year. The Obama administration has offered another \$500 million in working capital to get through April 30, when it has said it would cut off aid.

Geithner to outline efforts to fix the banking system

WASHINGTON (AP)—Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner is expected to outline the Obama administration's efforts to clean up the U.S. banking system during meetings Friday with finance ministers from the Group of Seven nations, a department official said.

Getting banks to lend again, along with government stimulus spending, is critical to turning around the U.S. and global economies, the official said Thursday, speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak on the record.

His comments came the same day that Dominique Strauss-Kahn, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, urged the U.S. and Europe to do more to remove distressed assets from banks' balance sheets. World leaders pledged to take such steps during a summit in London April 2.

Postponing such steps, Strauss-Kahn said, would "postpone the recovery."

Finance officials from around the world are gathering in Washington for three days of discussions beginning Friday. The G-7 meetings will be followed by talks over dinner that night among the Group of 20 nations, which adds major

remains unresolved, according to the newspaper.

UAW representatives could not be reached for comment late Thursday.

Chrysler spokeswoman Shawn Morgan said in an e-mail that "it's important to keep all options open."

"Chrysler will continue to work through the end of the month, based on the direction given by the Presidential auto task force, to secure the support of the necessary stakeholders and reach a successful conclusion that the administration and U.S. Treasury deems appropriate," Morgan said.

Chrysler's secured lenders consist of large and small banks and hedge funds that have poured about \$6.9 billion into the Auburn Hills, Mich., company. These lenders—about 45—would be first in line to get paid if the company's assets were liquidated.

Chrysler has been living on \$4 billion in government aid since the beginning of the year. The Obama administration has offered another \$500 million in working capital to get through April 30, when it has said it would cut off aid.

The Treasury official said an "important component" of the Obama administration's efforts to clean up the U.S. banking system during meetings Friday with finance ministers from the Group of Seven nations, a department official said.

The tests are intended to gauge how the banks would fare in a severe recession and determine which institutions need more capital. The additional money, if needed, would come from the private sector or the government. Officials are to release the methodology for the stress tests Friday and privately begin telling the institutions how they performed.

Meanwhile, Strauss-Kahn and Robert Zoellick, the head of the IMF's sister organization, pledged new resources to fight the worst global downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s, while warning that the crisis is far from over.

"We still have long months of economic distress in front of us," Strauss-Kahn said.

The IMF's board agreed to double the borrowing limits for 78 of the poorest countries in an effort to meet the needs of developing nations harmed by the downturn.

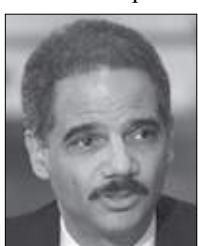
Nation

Holder won't selectively release terror memos

WASHINGTON (AP)—Attorney General Eric Holder told Congress on Thursday he won't play "hide and seek" with secret memos about harsh interrogations of terror suspects and their effectiveness. In testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, Holder said he's willing to release as much information as possible about the interrogations.

Several members of the committee pressed him about the Justice Department's release last week of four long-secret legal memos detailing the harsh techniques used on some detainees during the Bush administration.

"It is certainly the intention of this ad-



Holder

ministration not to play hide and seek, or not to release certain things," said Holder. "It is not our intention to try to advance a political agenda or to try to hide things from the American people."

Republicans—including former Vice President Dick Cheney—have urged the Obama administration to release other, still-secret documents detailing what intelligence was gained from the controversial interrogation techniques.

"I think you have an obligation to release the rest of the memos," said Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va.

Holder said he wasn't sure exactly which memos Cheney is referring to, because he hasn't seen them. The attorney

general suggested such classified documents may exist at other agencies.

"I'm the attorney general and I don't control many of the memos you might be talking about," said Holder.

When the Obama administration released the memos last week, the president declared no CIA operatives who followed the memos' instructions would be prosecuted. The administration has not offered the same assurances to the memo authors or the Bush officials who oversaw the program.

Congressional Democrats have expressed a strong desire to conduct their own investigation of those officials.

At Thursday's hearing, members of both parties asked Holder if he plans to seek charges against those officials.

"I will not permit the criminalization

of policy differences. However, it is my responsibility as attorney general to enforce the law. It is my duty to enforce the law. If I see evidence of wrongdoing I will pursue it to the full extent of

the law," Holder said.

Officials are still awaiting the results of an internal Justice Department investigation into the actions of the memo-writers.

SC wildfire biggest in more than 3 decades



This aerial image shows a smoke-diffused sun reflecting off a pond in this Barefoot Resort community in North Myrtle Beach, S.C. on Thursday, April 23, 2009.

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. (AP)—South Carolina's biggest wildfire in more than three decades—a blaze four miles wide—destroyed dozens of homes Thursday and threatened some of the area's world-famous golf courses at the height of the spring tourist season.

The flames, fed by tinder-dry scrubland, forced hundreds of people to flee, and some took shelter in the House of Blues honkytonk.

The fire got within 1 1/2 miles of Route 17, the main coastal road that links beachfront towns and is lined with fast-food restaurants, beachwear stores and trinket shops. By Thursday evening, the flames were about 3 miles west of the highway.

The blaze scorched about 19,600

acres, or about 31 square miles, over the past two days and then veered north, heading away from the high-rise hotels that line Myrtle Beach. There were no reports of injuries, and authorities said they had not determined what sparked the flames.

Fueled by dry underbrush and highly combustible swamp peat, the blaze leveled about 70 homes and damaged 100 others early Thursday as the fire jumped a four-lane highway. The flames also forced authorities to evacuate 2,500 people. Some returned home Thursday evening while, at the same time, a couple of miles north, police told people to leave 30 other homes, an order that was lifted after a few hours.

Horry County officials said in a statement Thursday night the fire was 40 percent contained. Holly Welch, a spokeswoman for the South Carolina Forestry Commission, said crews had successfully used plows to hold off a portion of the blaze but noted that the situation could worsen if winds were to start blowing Friday in an unexpected direction.

"While we think we have things secured, that could all go out the window tomorrow," she said.

Much of the damage was concentrated at Barefoot Resort, a sprawling complex of houses, condominiums and golf courses separated from the main route through Myrtle Beach by the Intracoastal Waterway.

The posting does not mention Markoff by name, and Wark says investigators aren't sure there are other victims.

Markoff is charged in the April 14 killing of Julissa Brisman, a 25-year-

old masseuse he met through Craigslist. He is also charged in a robbery of another masseuse that police say he met through Craigslist.

Also Thursday, a law enforcement official, speaking to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the case, said Markoff had been placed on suicide watch at the Boston jail where he is being held. ABC News and The Boston Globe, citing unidentified law enforcement sources, reported that what appeared to be shoelace marks were found on his neck.

Defense attorney John Salsberg told reporters he was concerned about Markoff's well-being but otherwise declined to comment on the reports.

Jail officials declined to comment to The Associated Press, citing privacy rules.

Investigators were not certain the Craigslist ad would produce new leads.

"There may not be any other victims out there, but if there are and they have not seen or are not comfortable responding to our requests in the mainstream media, this may be a way to make contact with them," Wark said.

Supplement given to polo horses incorrectly made

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Unable to legally bring a supplement into the U.S. to make their horses more resilient, a Venezuelan polo team used another way to get ready for a champion match: Have a pharmacy mix up the concoction. What happened next, though, was disastrous. The chemicals were mixed wrong, and 21 horses given the brew died in rapid succession, some collapsing just before taking the field in a championship polo match.

The others fell soon after, one by one, shocking a well-heeled crowd gathered to watch the U.S. Open at the International Polo Club Palm Beach in Wellington.

The Lechuza polo team had hoped to get a compound similar to a name-brand supplement used safely around the world to help horses with exhaustion but hasn't been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Veteri-

narians commonly turn to compounding pharmacies for medications that can't be found on shelves, but the dispensaries can only recreate unapproved drugs in limited circumstances.

A Florida pharmacy that mixed the medication said Thursday that an internal review found "the strength of an ingredient in the medication was incorrect." Jennifer Beckett, chief operating officer for Franck's Pharmacy in Ocala, Fla., would not say whether the incorrect amount was specified in the order that came from a Florida veterinarian.

Lechuza said the order was for a compound similar to Biodyl, a supplement that includes vitamins and minerals. The team has been using the supplement for many years without problems, but typically uses the manufactured version instead of going to compounding pharmacies.

ACROSS THE NATION

Recent Justice Dept. videos show Demjanjuk walking

CLEVELAND (AP)—Federal prosecutors have submitted videos of John Demjanjuk (dem-YAHN'-yuk) to a federal appeals court that show the alleged Nazi death camp guard walking and talking animatedly. Prosecutors filed the April 6 videos at the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Thursday. They said the videos show a contrast from the 89-year-old man who groaned on April 14 as agents carried him from his home. An arrest warrant claims Demjanjuk was an accessory

to some 29,000 deaths during World War II in Nazi-occupied Poland. The Cincinnati-based appeals court halted Demjanjuk's deportation shortly after immigration officers took him from his home. The court has since requested detailed records about Demjanjuk's medical condition to see if he's healthy enough to travel.

Charges weighed in Mich. quadriplegic girl's death

FLINT, Mich. (AP)—Prosecutors on Thursday were deciding whether to charge the adoptive mother of a 9-year-

old quadriplegic girl whose body was found in a storage unit—a child the woman had allegedly insisted was out of state when authorities first questioned her. Charges could range from felony murder to lesser charges such as misdemeanor moving a corpse. The woman was arrested Wednesday after police found Shylea Myza Thomas' body in a black trash bag, stuffed into a plastic bin with mothballs and locked in a storage unit near Flint. Shylea had been taken out of school in January, and relatives told state officials they had not seen her in six weeks. At least one neighbor said she hadn't even been aware the little

girl lived there." This is a very sad and tragic case that hurts all of us involved in the ongoing investigation," Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton said in a statement. "It appears that Shylea had a rough go in life."

Ex-teacher gets 8-10 years for sex with student

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—A former Nebraska teacher who fled to Mexico with a 13-year-old student was sentenced Thursday to eight to 10 years in prison. Kelsey Peterson, 27, pleaded guilty in January to two state counts of first-

degree sexual assault of a minor. She is to serve her sentence simultaneously with a six-year federal prison sentence for transporting a minor across state lines to have sex. She also must register as a sex offender. Authorities said Peterson was the boy's sixth-grade math teacher at Lexington Middle School during the 2005-06 school year and started having sex with him in November 2006. They said she fled with him to Mexico after the district's superintendent confronted Peterson about allegations of an inappropriate relationship with the boy. She was arrested a week later in Mexico after the boy called his mother.

Asia

Thai prime minister lifts state of emergency

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's prime minister lifted a state of emergency Friday that was imposed in the capital following anti-government riots by supporters of ousted former leader Thaksin Shinawatra, while authorities tried to locate the fugitive tycoon abroad.

Thaksin traveled to Liberia earlier this week to inquire about investing in diamonds, officials said, continuing his global wanderings in pursuit of business ventures. Liberia, known as a tax haven, is keen to lure foreign investors as it tries to move beyond its dark history of civil war that was funded and fueled by so-called "blood diamonds."

Prime Minister Abhisit Vej-

jajiva lifted the emergency Friday following a two-day special parliamentary session aimed at finding a solution to the country's political crisis. Many opposition lawmakers said the remaining emergency decree inflamed the still-tense situation in Thailand.

"Lifting the state of emergency is one of the measures to find a solution for the country," Abhisit told lawmakers.

The protests were part of Thailand's long-running political turmoil, which revolves around Thaksin's ouster in a 2006 military coup for alleged corruption and abuse of power. Thaksin, a telecommunications tycoon, fled the country last year ahead of a corruption conviction.

Thaksin's supporters, who are known as the "red shirts," rioted in Bangkok last week, calling for Abhisit's resignation and new elections. Two people were killed and 123 injured as protesters clashed with troops and residents.

The state of emergency was imposed April 12 amid rioting in Bangkok. The decree had banned gatherings of more than five people and news reports that threatened public order and allowed the government to call up military troops to quell unrest.

Bangkok's police chief, Lt. Gen. Worapong Chiewpreecha, said security officials will remain vigilant to prevent new violence, including at a rally planned Saturday in Bangkok.

would stand trial "on the basis of the confirmed crimes." It did not say exactly what charges they face or when the trial would take place.

State-run media had said late last month that they were being investigated for illegal entry and unspecified "hostile acts."

Under North Korea's criminal code, conviction for illegal entry could mean up to three years in a labor camp.

It was unclear what charges would be applied for "hostile acts," according to South Korean legal expert Moon Dae-hong said, but conviction on espionage or "hostility toward North Koreans" carries a sentence of

five to 10 years in prison.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Fred Lash said Thursday night he had not seen the report and had no comment. Current TV officials were not available for comment.

In Seoul, Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-nyeon urged the North to abide by legal procedures during the trial.

The Americans' prolonged detention comes amid tensions over North Korea's move to fire a three-stage rocket on April 5 in defiance of international calls to refrain from a provocative launch seen by some as a test of its long-range missile technology.

banned, its leadership arrested, and a campaign launched to forcibly reconvert millions of believers. Anyone practicing Falun Gong or even possessing materials about it could be arrested.

Followers say the crackdown cost the lives of 3,200 practitioners, including 104 last year.

The government says some Falun Gong followers have died in detention because of hunger strikes or refusing medical help. But it denies any have been intentionally killed.

Two months later, the group was labeled an "evil cult" and

2 US journalists set to stand trial in NKorea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea has decided to put two U.S. journalists on trial following an investigation into allegations that they entered the country illegally and conducted "hostile acts," state-run media said Friday.

Laura Ling and Euna Lee, journalists working for former Vice President Al Gore's San Francisco-based Current TV media venture, were arrested March 17 near the North Korean border while reporting on refugees living in China.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said Friday that the investigation had concluded and that the reporters

China's decade-long ban on Falun Gong holds firm

BEIJING (AP)—Now entering its second decade, China's relentless drive to obliterate the Falun Gong spiritual sect has left a human toll ranging from the deaths of followers in custody to the self-exile of others and the beatings of their lawyers.

Saturday marks the 10th anniversary of a protest by an estimated 10,000 practitioners who stood silently around the Communist Party leadership compound in Beijing, alerting the government to the group's strength and wide appeal.

The April 25, 1999, demonstration was intended to show how Falun Gong believers had learned compassion, forbearance and tolerance, said practitioner Bu Dongwei in a telephone interview from the United States, where he fled six months ago.

But the size and discipline of those who gathered unsettled the communist leadership, ever wary of independent groups that could threaten its authority.

Two months later, the group was labeled an "evil cult" and

followers say the crackdown cost the lives of 3,200 practitioners, including 104 last year.

The government says some Falun Gong followers have died in detention because of hunger strikes or refusing medical help. But it denies any have been intentionally killed.

Zuma reminded several thousand supporters gathered outside his party's downtown Johannesburg headquarters that the tally was still going on—a technical point that hardly affected the party mood. But he noted with relish that skeptics who had claimed his African National Congress party wouldn't get 60 percent of the parliamentary vote now "are saying 70." With the all-but-official victory, Zuma takes on a heavy responsibility—meeting expectations for change among South Africa's impoverished black majority.

World

Blasts kill 78 in Iraq's bloodiest day in a year

BAGHDAD (AP)—Suicide bomb blasts tore through crowds waiting for food aid in central Baghdad and inside a roadside restaurant filled with Iranian pilgrims Thursday, killing at least 78 people in Iraq's deadliest day in more than a year.

The toll—at least 31 dead in Baghdad and 47 to the north in Diyala province—follows a series of high-profile attacks this month blamed on Sunni insurgents. The violence highlights potential security gaps as Iraqi forces increasingly take the lead role from U.S. forces in protecting Baghdad and key areas around the capital.

The insurgent push is still nowhere near the scale of violence in past years, but it has undermined confidence that Iraq's security gains were on solid footing at a time when the U.S. military is shifting its focus and re-



A woman reacts near the site of a bomb explosion in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, April 23, 2009.

sources to Afghanistan.

Thursday's attacks happened as American soldiers who specialize in clearing bombs from roads boarded a plane from Iraq to the Taliban heartland in southern Afghanistan, part of the largest movement of personnel and equipment between the

two war fronts.

Iraqi authorities, meanwhile, say they have struck back at the heart of the insurgency: claiming they arrested one of the most wanted leaders of a militant network linked to al-Qaida.

The reported capture of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, the head of the Islamic State of Iraq, could mark a setback to insurgents as they try to intensify attacks after a relative lull.

In the past, however, Iraqi officials have reported al-Baghdadi's arrest or killing, only to acknowledge later that they were wrong. The U.S. military has even said al-Baghdadi could be a fictitious character used to give an Iraqi face to an organization dominated by foreign al-Qaida fighters.

A U.S. military could not confirm the arrest, said a spokesman, 1st Lt. John A. Brimley.

Magistrate Catherine Mwangi adjourned their case until a bail hearing May 27. They will remain in a Mombasa jail until then. She also demanded that officials give the men fresh clothing for their bail hearing.

"I'm giving you an order that these people be dressed properly," Mwangi told court officials.

Suspected Somali pirates appear in Kenyan court

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP)—The 11 Somali men, accused in a pirate attack on a Liberian freighter, filed slowly into the wood-paneled court. The magistrate took one look at their dingy shirts, jackets and sarongs—two were barefoot—and ordered a court official to make sure they were "dressed properly" for their next appearance.

Amid proposals for an international tribunal to tackle piracy, Kenya is implementing agreements with the Eu-

ropean Union and the United States by putting the bandits on trial, even if they are caught on the high seas by other nations and have not attacked Kenyan interests.

Thursday's hearing was the first court appearance for the men who were tracked down by French commandos and seized April 15 from their skiffs in waters off Somalia, the lawless epicenter of the flourishing pirate industry off the Horn of Africa.

The pirate suspects had

WORLD BRIEFS

US suspect sees video of alleged murder victim

PERUGIA, Italy (AP)—An American student turned somber and buried her face in her hands Thursday when the blood-covered face of the woman she is accused of murdering was shown in video footage at her trial in central Italy. Amanda Knox, 21, quickly looked away and held her head down when images of Meredith Kercher's body at the murder scene were shown in court. Knox and her former boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito are on trial in Perugia for murder. Both deny any wrongdoing. The American student had been exchanging smiles and whispers with Sollecito, who sat some distance away, but her expression darkened when police official Claudio Cantagalli showed videos detailing the blood-splattered room, Kercher's face and her foot sticking out from a duvet. Sollecito, 25, kept on looking. The body of British student Kercher was found Nov. 2, 2007, in the apartment she shared with Knox.

Backers of South Africa's Zuma celebrate the vote

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—South Africa's governing party set off fireworks and popped fizzy bottles of champagne Thursday as ballots were counted in the country's latest election. ANC chief Jacob Zuma said he was only thanking campaign workers—but the celebration left little doubt about his ascension to the presi-

dency. Zuma reminded several thousand supporters gathered outside his party's downtown Johannesburg headquarters that the tally was still going on—a technical point that hardly affected the party mood. But he noted with relish that skeptics who had claimed his African National Congress party wouldn't get 60 percent of the parliamentary vote now "are saying 70." With the all-but-official victory, Zuma takes on a heavy responsibility—meeting expectations for change among South Africa's impoverished black majority.

Reputed Hitler watercolors sell at English auction

LUDLOW, England (AP)—What a British auction house claims are a set of paintings and sketches by a young Adolf Hitler sold at auction Thursday for 97,672 pounds (\$143,358). Among the 15 pictures is a portrait of a figure dressed in brown peering into wine-colored waters. The date is 1910, the signature reads "A. Hitler" and scribbled just over the mysterious figure are the letters: "A.H." So is this a portrait of the Fuehrer as a young man? "I don't think they're fakes," said Richard Westwood-Brookes, historical documents expert at auction house Mullocks that carried out the sale. He said he did not believe anyone would have the nerve to fake the pictures, given the global publicity they have received. The portrait itself sold for about 10,000 pounds (\$14,600).

ASIAN BRIEFS

UN sending expert team to Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The more than 100,000 civilians pouring out of Sri Lanka's war zone have included people with untreated blast, mine and gunshot wounds—prompting the U.N. chief on Thursday to order an expert team to assess the "rapidly deteriorating situation." Doctors Without Borders warned that civilian casualties are rising in the zone where the military is trying to finish off a 25-year-old insurgency, while the government pleaded for humanitarian aid. "I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and women, unintended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months," said Neil Buhne, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator, after returning from the northern town of Vauniya, where tens of thousands of people are kept in overcrowded government camps.

Chinese man shot 34 times in head with nail gun

SYDNEY (AP)—Australian police appealed to the public Friday for help in solving the gruesome killing of a Chinese man who was shot 34 times in the head and neck with a nail gun before being dumped in a river. Chen Liu's badly decomposed body was found in Sydney on Nov. 1, about two weeks after a friend reported him missing, but police have yet to say whether they've identified any suspects. New South Wales state police on Friday asked the public to provide any information they may have about the case, releasing graphic X-ray images of the 27-year-old's skull to highlight the brutality of the crime. "In 36 years, I've never seen a murder of this nature," Homicide Squad Superintendent Geoff Beresford told reporters. "It's a particularly brutal and vicious murder and hence the reason we are seeking information from the public."

Maharlika

PINoy Life in the Marianas

Saturday, April 25, 2009

DOLE provides safety net for displaced OFWs

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Overseas Filipino workers in the CNMI who are displaced due to the global financial crisis or for any other reason may receive a package of assistance and services from the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment.

The CNMI, which is home to an estimated 10,000 OFWs and Filipino-Americans, has seen large numbers of foreign workers sent home in recent years not only because of the death of the garment industry but also due to the global financial crisis.

These services for displaced OFWs primarily involve finding them another suitable employment locally or overseas, or

helping them set up livelihood or income generating projects.

Philippine labor attaché to the CNMI Joann Lourdes Lavilla said the first step would be for returning OFWs to fill up an application form before leaving the CNMI.

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office on Saipan will then fax the completed application form to the National Reintegration Center for OFWs for review, just in time for the return of the OFW to the country.

"We would like to inform those who decided to go home for good that there's a package of assistance given by DOLE through the National Reintegration Center for OFWs or NRCO. It's mainly business counseling, training, local and overseas job placement," she said.

OFWs are encouraged to call POLO or the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration at 235-6992, 235-3411 or 287-6867 for more information, or drop by their offices on the ground floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (formerly Nauru Building) in Susupe.

The package of assistance is administered by NRCO, which offers services divided into three categories: counseling, capability enhancement, and linkages and networking.

Under the counseling services, OFWs and their families will be guided on values formation and prepare OFWs for eventual reintegration into the local workforce.

The services include choosing re-entry options such as employment and livelihood,

financial and investment opportunities, participating in brain gain initiatives and retirement programs, and sharing their expertise as part of their social and economic commitment in their respective communities.

NRCO's capability enhancement services include equipping OFWs and their families with knowledge and skills in their desired re-entry options toward their personal, economic and community reintegration.

Specific services include financial literacy, financial planning and management, savings and special remittance schemes, and investment options and opportunities.

Under NRCO's networking services, OFWs and their families will be connected with reintegration needs to

CONTACT INFO

- 235-6992
- 235-3411
- 287-6867
- Or visit the ground floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (formerly Nauru Building) in Susupe.

ON THE NET

www.nrco.dole.gov.ph

appropriate stakeholders or service providers.

The specific services include assisting OFWs and their families in business formation, access to credit facilities, technology and product development, market assistance, and skills upgrading/re-tooling,

among other things.

OWWA also came out with the Filipino Expatriate Livelihood Support Fund as safety net for their displacement due to the global financial crisis.

After OFWs have availed of assistance from NRCO for the initial assistance package, any interested OFW may avail of the FELSF, which offers a non-collateral loan window where the displaced OFWs can loan up Php50,000 or close to \$1,000 with a very low interest of 5 percent per annum, payable in 24 months.

According to DOLE, government banks can also extend loans through their collateral windows if worker decides to expand his business enterprise.

More information is available online at www.nrco.dole.gov.ph.

Overseas Filipinos told: Get out and register

MANILA, Philippines—Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Special Concerns Rafael Seguis on Tuesday urged all Filipinos overseas to go to the nearest Philippine embassy or consulate and register.

Seguis, who also heads the Department of Foreign Affairs' Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat (OAVS), said the number of new overseas absentee voters (OAV) who have registered as of April 21 is 52,557, still a far cry from the one million target.

He said he expects the figures to rise sharply as the campaign for it in all Philippine foreign service posts intensifies toward the end of the OAV registration period until August 31 this year.

Citing the OAVS report, he said Hong Kong posted the biggest number of OAV registrants at 5,715. The nine other foreign service posts in the top 10 are: Los Angeles with 3,981; London, 2,569; Toronto, 2,322; Dubai, 1,947; New York, 1,859; Washington D.C., 1,541; Brunei, 1,379; and Tokyo, 1,224.

In terms of countries, Seguis said the United States registered the most number at 9,887. The nine other countries in the top 10 are: China with 6,111; Canada, 2,729; United Kingdom, 2,569; United Arab Emirates, 2,273; Singapore, 2,232; Italy, 1,602; Japan, 1,543; Taiwan, 1,535; and Brunei, 1,379.

The foreign affairs official said the one million target still

holds. "To date, the OAVS has issued a series of instructions to all foreign service posts to strengthen their strategies in order to garner one million OAV registrants for the 2010 national elections," he added.

Among the instructions were for personnel at the posts to register and for them to promote OAV registration through activities by Filipino communities in their areas of responsibility.

"The posts and attaches from other government or semi-government agencies, under the leadership of the chiefs of mission/ambassadors/heads of posts, shall collaborate and cooperate with one another to achieve the one million overseas absentee voters for the 2010 national elections," according to the OAVS instruction to posts.

Seguis said the posts were encouraged to tie-up with Globe, Smart, and other telecommunications companies in the effort to inform all Filipinos overseas of the on-going registration.

"Posts with seaports were instructed to replicate Brussels Philippine embassy's implementation of 'Akyat Barko' where it coordinates with ship owners/principals, ship representatives, manning agencies, and authorities of the host government to urge/encourage Filipino seafarers to register for the upcoming national elections," the instruction also said. (*INQUIRER.net*)

RP drivers tell of 3-month ordeal in Dubai



PROTEST RALLY

Police block protesters as they tried to march towards the U.S. embassy expressing their outrage after the Court of Appeal overturned the rape conviction of U.S. Marine Lance Corporal Daniel Smith Friday, April 24, 2009 in Manila, Philippines. Smith left the country under the authority of U.S. military officials a day after the controversial court's decision, which was greeted by protests. *See story on next page.*

RP seeks end to racism vs migrant workers

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—No discrimination against migrant workers and more protection of their human rights in the continuing global fight against racism.

This was the call made by the Philippines at the World Conference on Racism held in Geneva, Switzerland, on Wednesday, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

A statement from the depart-

ment Thursday said that Severo S. Catura, undersecretary in the Office of the President and executive director of the Presidential Human Rights Committee of the Philippines, told the High-Level Segment of the Durban Review Conference that the current global financial and economic crises made migrants miss job opportunities and exposed them to "social exclusion, exploitation and xenophobia."

The Philippine delegate also called on governments that

had not signed the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICPRMW) to consider doing so to help ensure the protection and non-discrimination of migrants and members of their families.

"Migrants have become even more vulnerable in this global era, and thus need greater protection of their human rights as well as protection from racism and xenophobia," Catura said.

By CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—They were forced to live in dumps, often foraging for rotten tomatoes and competing with camels for their next meal while waiting for jobs that were not there in the first place.

These were the stories told by 22 bus drivers who testified at a Senate hearing Wednesday about their three-month ordeal in Dubai where they were left to fend for themselves by their recruiters.

They were part of a batch of 137 drivers who had come home after finding out too late that there was no place for them at Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority.

"Many of us only had the equivalent of P600 in pocket allowance while the rest had none," Santos said, adding that they scavenged mostly for tomatoes which they cooked for their meals. "We had to start our hunt early, otherwise the camels would beat us to the tomatoes," he added.

The drivers, who left in three batches in January, asked the Senate labor committee how they could recover the P150,000 in placement fee they paid or how to file cases against their recruiters. Borrowing money from RJL La-caba Financing, the firm that provided loans for some of them, the drivers had issued post-dated checks to pay back their loans.

Palace respects US marine's acquittal in Nicole case

By TJ BURGONIO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Malacañang said it respected the Court of Appeals' decision acquitting Lance Corporal Daniel Smith of the U.S. Marines of raping a Filipina at the Subic Bay Freeport in 2005.

"While we have not yet read the decision of the Court of Appeals, we respect the verdict of the court on this matter," undersecretary Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said.

An all-female division of the Court of Appeals ruled that the incident from which the case arose wasn't rape, but a "spontaneous, unplanned romantic episode stirred by alcoholic drinks."

In overturning the conviction handed down by the Makati Regional Trial Court in December 2006, the Court of Appeals Special Eleventh Division ordered the immediate release of the American Marine who has been under the custody of the US Embassy.

The division was composed of Associate Justices Remedios Fernando (chair), Myrna Dimaranan-Vidal and Monina Arevalo-Zenarosa, who penned the decision.

The court disregarded Nicole's March 28, 2009, affidavit that was interpreted as a recantation of her original claim that she was raped by Smith with the help of his fellow Marines S/Sgt. Chad Brian Carpenter, L/Cpl. Dominic Duplantis and L/Cpl. Keith Silkwood.

The trial court had acquitted the group except for Smith, now 24, who was sentenced to life imprisonment.

"Ultimately, it must be point-

ed out that in resolving the case, we disregard the alleged recantation of Nicole submitted on March 8, 2009. Nor did we open the sealed draft decision penned by retired Justice Agustin S. Dizon which was attached to the records," the appellate court said in its 71-page decision.

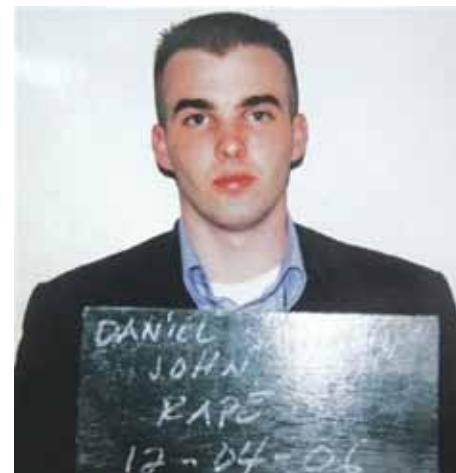
The court said it acquitted Smith based on a "careful and judicious perusal of the evidence on record," which it said did not convince them of the "moral certainty of the guilt of the accused (Smith)."

"What we see was the unfolding of a spontaneous, unplanned romantic episode with both parties carried away by their passions and stirred up by the urgency of the moment caused probably by alcoholic drinks they took, only to be rudely interrupted when the van suddenly stopped to pick up some passengers," the court said.

"No evidence was introduced to show force, threat and intimidation applied by the accused (Smith) upon Nicole, even as the prosecution vainly tried to highlight her supposed intoxication and alleged unconsciousness at the time of the sexual act," it said.

The court pointed out that the formal charges filed in the trial court did not say that Nicole was "deprived of reason or unconscious" at the time.

The court questioned Nicole's claim that she was already drunk while she danced with Smith inside the Neptune Club, and that the last thing she could remember was going out of the bar with Smith and then "when I recovered conscious-



A booking photo of Lance Corporal Daniel Smith.

ness, he was already on top of me, kissing me all over even as I was resisting his advances."

The appellate court over-

turned the lower court's conclusion that contusions in Nicole's private parts were caused by forcible entry. It said that the medico legal officer, Dr. Rolando Ortiz II, admitted that "it was probable that even in consensual sex, contusions could be inflicted by finger grabs as in Nicole's case."

The court concluded that Nicole's portrayal of herself as a "demure provinciana lass going on a first-time vacation to Subic" as mere "deceptive posturing."

"On hindsight, we see this protestation of decency as a protective shield against her own indecorous behavior," the

court said.

"Her going to Subic from far away Zamboanga with her stepsister, (with) two American friends whom they met only about three months earlier and accepting their offer of free hotel accommodations and other things as well—in her words, 'to enjoy'—do not coincide with the demure provinciana lass we are talking about," the court said.

The woman has since left for the United States to live with her American boyfriend who she had met after the alleged rape.

The Arroyo administration has been severely criticized for failing to help the complainant, identified in court only as Nicole, during the rape trial and

for turning over Smith to the US embassy close to midnight after he was convicted by the Makati RTC in December 2006.

In allowing the US embassy to retain custody of Smith during his appeal, the Arroyo administration and the US embassy cited a provision in the Visiting Forces Agreement, which states that American servicemen will remain in US custody during all legal proceedings regarding offenses they commit on Philippine territory.

Months ago, US President Barack Obama called up President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to emphasize the importance of the VFA. Just weeks after that, the Nicole issued an affidavit doubting her recollections of the rape.

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BRUCE L. MAILMAN is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and has provided immigration services in the CNMI since 1989

MAYA B. KARA is a former CNMI Acting Attorney General, Chief Legislative Counsel, Governor's and Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel and DOL Hearing Officer

Last hostage lost; P.5M in cash for information

By JOCELYN UY, MICHAEL LIM
UBAC, JULIE ALIPALA
 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER,
 INQUIRER MINDANAO

MANILA, Philippines—The government Thursday dangled a P500,000 cash reward to villagers who could point to authorities the location of Italian hostage Eugenio Vagni following intelligence reports that his Abu Sayyaf captors had turned him over to another armed group.

Officials squelched reports that the 62-year-old humanitarian worker had been abandoned by his kidnappers in the Jolo forest.

Sen. Richard Gordon said he was last in contact with kidnap leader Albader Parad on Wednesday and that Parad told him, referring to Vagni: "God will take care of him, whatever happens."

Security forces searching for Vagni clashed on Wednesday with a group of at least 50 armed men near Talipao but there was

no sighting of the hostage during the firefight, officials said.

Vagni was one of the three International Committee of the Red Cross kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo on Jan. 15. Filipino engineer Mary Jean Lacaba was released April 2, while Swiss Andreas Notter was safely recovered last weekend.

"We have now received reports that Vagni was left by his captors to another group but they are now staying in one

area because they can no longer move the hostage due to his deteriorating condition," Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Jesus Verzosa said.

Officials say Vagni needs hernia surgery and can barely walk.

"We will give a P500,000 reward to anyone who could help lead us to Mr. Vagni's exact whereabouts," added Verzosa, who flew to Jolo with Interior Secretary Ronald Puno to meet with the local crisis committee.

Intelligence reports said Parad had handed Vagni over to another Abu Sayyaf group

somewhere in Indanan town.

"As of the moment, Vagni is still in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers," Lt. Col. Edgard Arevalo, Jolo-based hostage crisis spokesperson, told the Philippine Daily Inquirer by phone.

He said that although the crisis committee had allowed a military rescue operation, soldiers had not made any drastic attempt to get the Italian back.

"Our main priority is still for his safe recovery," Arevalo said.

In Zamboanga, Puno said the authorities launched a pursuit operation against the Abu Sayyaf on Wednesday, after learning

the kidnappers had split into four groups.

"Apparently another group went south and was able to get to Langkawan area in the town of Parang, board a pumpboat and went by sea to the town of Talipao," Puno said.

Another group went north. "They were trying to go up to Patikul and they ran into the PNP and the police auxiliaries. There was an engagement there and they were chased by the police and the police auxiliaries of the mayor of Talipao and of Governor (Abdusakur) Tan," Puno added.



KEEPING DRY

Filipino women enjoy a ride on a cart to keep them dry from flood waters in Manila, Philippines.

TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Plan your fun-spending this summer

Editor's Note: This is part of Take Charge of your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: These days, all TV and newspaper reports say we have to really cut down on spending because the global financial crisis is not yet about to end. If we do so, how else can we get to enjoy life? I was really looking forward to treating my wife and young kids to a summer vacation. But should I save the money instead? — Mikey

Answer: It's true that some belt-tightening is required during times of crisis. At this time, governments and corporations are themselves tightening their belts, cutting costs in order to increase the bottom line—the profit. This is because consumer spending is low, resulting in lower sales for companies.

Individuals should also have the same viewpoint: Cut costs in order to increase the bottom line—your savings. This is to prepare for any eventuality, job loss included.

It's not easy—nor fun—to cut down on spending. But those who spend their money responsibly and not frivolously today will be rewarded in the end. That will come in the form of having an ample emergency fund one has saved up for, or a retirement nest egg ready just when one needs it.

Still, there should be room for some fun even in belt-tightening mode. Here's how you can enjoy life, Mikey, crisis time or not:

Analyze your spending pattern. Once you get your paycheck, what do you do? If you immediately go out and shop or spend the night with friends at a bar, it's about time you get a hold of yourself. Prioritize what is important first, then there will be time—and funds—for fun. Before you

make a purchase or spend for something, ask yourself: Is this a need or a want? Prioritize needs over wants.

Set aside a regular amount for savings. Relax, this should not take a big chunk of your paycheck. Start with 10 percent of your income. Start an emergency fund to tide you over during emergencies. This should be built up to an amount equal to about six months' worth of your expenses.

Apportion the rest of your income through a budget. Determine how much you will spend on food, transportation, rent, and etcetera. Use a spreadsheet or do it the traditional way—via pen and paper. Just find time to do it. Then follow through by spending according to your budget.

Allot some money for fun. Make "fun spending" part of your budget. If your budget will allow it, this may mean a movie date at a nice cinema, a new gadget, or dinner with friends at a new restaurant. If the fun fund is limited, reward yourself with something to make you feel good: a massage, a cup of gourmet coffee, or a DVD. Or you may want to save your fun fund so you can have a bigger treat later on.

Now why should there be money for fun when people are supposed to be saving as there is a global financial crisis? A little treat is like a pat in the back; it affirms our hard work and motivates us to work harder. It's our time to recharge. Remember the adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"? Don't deprive yourself of some fun spending. Just have fun according to your means.

Now here are some ways you can enjoy life this summer. These do not cost much.

1. Check out mall and school events for free or low cost entertainment. Recording artists, both foreign and local, do mall tours to promote their new albums. Malls also mount special programs to kick off a sale or summer promotion. In

schools, check out concert and theater schedules.

2. Visit art galleries and museums for a culture trip. Entrance is free or fees are very low. Looking at artworks can make for an interesting afternoon.

3. Bring the family to parks that won't burn a hole in your pocket. Some parks worth visiting are the La Mesa Eco Park, Manila Baywalk (catch the famous Manila sunset there), and Nayong Pilipino at Clark, Pampanga.

4. Instead of dining out, mount a themed feast at home. Make one day Italian Night, for instance, and cook fettuccini and make your own pizza. Or go Spanish and serve callos and paella. Even if you cook special food at home, dining at home still won't cost as much as dining out.

5. Invite your friends to some bonding time at home. Have a DVD marathon instead of going to a bar. Or have afternoon tea and show off your garden plants.

6. Shop at bargain centers. Divisoria, Baclaran and the mall department store can yield great finds.

7. Check out your credit card for rewards points. Exchange this for a nice treat, which may be a new gadget, gift certificate to a spa or restaurant, a cool sports item, and the like. You won't need to shell out precious pesos!

A little fun can be made part of one's budget. Enjoy the summer!

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PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

2 teens burn to death as car hits lamppost

MANILA—Two teenagers burned to death while four others were injured in an accident on Ortigas Avenue at the boundary of San Juan and Mandaluyong City on Wednesday evening, a police report said. The fatalities were identified as Ralph Adrian Chua Tuason, 18, a resident of San Juan City, and Carla Mae Utugawa, 19, of Agoo Street, Quezon City. They were with four other people in a Honda Civic sedan that was engulfed in flames after it hit a lamppost in the center island, the report said. It said the driver of the vehicle, Alfonso Miranda, a resident of Clairmont Townhomes on Acacia Lane in Mandaluyong City, was in critical condition at The Medical City in Pasig. Also injured were Michael Andrew, Rosalie Najarilla and a certain Viray.

Grenade attack kills 2

BAGUIO CITY—Two persons were killed and five others were hurt on Tuesday morning when a hand grenade was thrown at them on Leonard Wood Road here, police said. Police said Deo del Mundo and Billy Mendoza were walking on Leonard Wood Road at about 3:20 a.m. when a man in a pickup truck threw the grenade. They died at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center. (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

Belgian dies in mishap

BATANGAS CITY—A Belgian died while 13 others were injured when a Batangas City bound bus collided with a van on the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (STAR) Tuesday night, police said Wednesday. The Belgian was identified as Pierre de Ridder. Police said Ridder was driving a Kia Pregio van bound for Manila when an RRCG bus driven by Joel Labostro slammed into it. Ridder died instantly. Labostro and 12 bus passengers were taken to a hospital in Lipa City. Police said they were awaiting Labostro's release from the hospital to in-

vestigate him. (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

Murder witness killed, body found in river

ROXAS CITY—A 41-year-old witness to a murder committed five years ago was found dead Wednesday morning, floating at the Panay River off Premier de Mayo Street, Roxas City. The body of Ramil Estorque of Barangay (village) Ilas Sur, Dao town in Capiz was found by Elmer Andaya, a resident of Belo Subdivision, Premier de Mayor Street, Roxas City. The victim's body, which was in a state of decomposition, was inside a sack tied to three rocks. Estorque was the prime witness to the murder of John Rufo, also of Barangay Ilas Sur, Dao. Estorque witnessed the killing of Rufo, who was hacked to death by two men in Barangay Cabangahan, Maayon, Capiz five years ago. (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

Media critics score ABS-CBN coverage

MANILA, Philippines—When reporting about a "Kapamilya" caught in a personal tragedy and a legal fix, how did ABS-CBN fare in the eyes of media industry critics? For Vergel Santos, veteran journalist and chair of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, the broadcast giant showed "a fraternal bias" for its top news anchor Ted Failon in its coverage of his wife's violent death and the ensuing police investigation. ABS-CBN seemed to have adopted a policy of questioning everything that the police said, according to CMFR Executive Director Melinda Quintos de Jesus. This led to a "polarization" between Failon's family and the authorities. "So the viewer could not decide what made sense in the incident." Luis Teodoro, former dean of the University of the Philippines' College of Mass Communication, shared the view: "It was a bit overdone especially on the part of ABS-CBN. There were stories that were repeated." (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Echo tries love songs

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Is the musician in Jericho Rosales selling out?

Last week, Jericho announced that his group, Jeans, has disbanded. He added that, instead of the "funky and offbeat" tunes he recorded with Jeans in the albums "Loose Fit" (2005) and "Jericho" (2008), he now wants to sing love songs "to give listeners what they want to hear."

Formerly signed with EMI Music, Jericho recently inked a one-album deal with Star Records. More popularly known as an actor, Jericho denied that what he did was "selling out." He told Inquirer Entertainment shortly after signing the deal with Star Records at the ABS-CBN compound: "What I want is to find balance. Right now, I simply want to go for music that's more embraceable."

He elaborated: "My first albums were a little indie-ish. Now that I know what they want, I wish to please my listeners. Then maybe afterwards, I can re-introduce to them my kind of music. That's give-and-take.

Lovers' 'rigodon'

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines— Angel Locsin is all agog about her upcoming teleserye, "Only You," with Sam Milby and Diether Ocampo.

The Pinoy version of the hit Korean series premieres April 27 on ABS-CBN. "I'm excited because it's been nine months na wala akong TV show, puro movies," said Angel.

How's her working relationship with Sam?



"Medyo nagtampo si Sam when I referred to him as little boy," she revealed. "What I meant by that was, napakatoo ng mga kilos niya. It's the way he offers me food and shows me his gadgets. I find it so cute. 'Yun ang ibig kong sabihin na little boy siya. 'Kala niya it meant immature. Of course not!"

How about Diet? "At first I felt awkward kasi medyo senior siya sa akin. Baka hindi ko mahiritan," she said. "But when we warmed up, I found out how fun he is to be with and sensible kausap."

What a coincidence that Gel's ex, Oyo Boy Sotto, and Diet's ex, Kristine Hermosa, are now together. By a twist of fate and switch of networks, their "only you's" have made a rigodon.

Survivor

Paolo Bediones had a "jolt-

Kung saan ako mas maraming maaabot na tao, doon ako."

Jericho insisted that the next album will still have his personal touch. "It will feature a couple of original compositions. I'll make sure everyone will appreciate it," he said. For the 10-track CD that will be released in June, Jericho hopes to collaborate with veteran artists like Gary Valenciano, Sugarfree and Parokya ni Edgar.

"He sent a demo tape of his songs. When I heard it, my first reaction, honestly, was: 'Ikaw ba ito?' It was a pleasant surprise," said Star Records managing director Annabelle Regalado-Borja. "He writes well. We're hoping to develop that for this CD."

You're making good music. Do you have a muse?

I don't have a girlfriend right now, if that's what you mean. I've been writing music even before I signed up with EMI. I've always been into writing poems. Some of the songs on my first album were initially poems. I'm happy because I'm busy with my music. I'm past the writing stage. Now it's time to record.



Jericho Rosales now wants to sing love songs "to give listeners what they want to hear."

Are you and Karylle an item?

No. I'm not courting her. I do go out with her, sometimes to eat or watch shows, but not without other friends from our show ("I Love Betty la Fea"). I can't lose focus now. I just want to concentrate on work.

Does this mean a romantic relationship with Carmen Soo is also impossible?

I have a good working relationship with Carmen. 'Yun muna. (Jericho is making a movie with Carmen and former girlfriend Kristine Hermosa.) She's taking up Tagalog lessons right now. She says she easily gets distracted when I teach her new words. Makulit daw ako. She knows a lot now—colors, numbers, days of the week and even body parts. She always tells me: "Ang kapal ng mukha mo."

How different is your music now?

People will hear cool love songs. It will be pang-masa, but high-quality pang-masa. I'm glad that Star Records took time to listen to my work. I know I still have to improve my writing skills. I'm just happy because I've never been this much appreciated, musically. I first met with Ate Annabelle three years ago and asked her to listen to my songs. But I used to be too sensitive and didn't want her to touch my work. I've changed. I can now listen objectively to what other people think.

What will happen to your band?

We disbanded a year ago. Some of the members left for Singapore or China to find work there. I fully understand their sentiments. It's very difficult for them when I get too busy with my TV shows. Now, I'm going to work with other musicians and producers with whom I collaborated with in my past albums.

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Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Vulnerable

Most people who have seen and heard about the cheating done in past elections welcome the move to computerize the 2010 polls. But some have expressed apprehensions, saying that computerized polls could result in computerized cheating. Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano has gone so far as to propose that P100 million be set aside as an incentive for a hacker to demonstrate the weakness of the automated poll system that would be used in the 2010 elections.

The bids of interested suppliers of the counting machines will be opened on April 27. Before then tests to determine whether the various machines being offered are foolproof should be conducted.

Actually, there are two urgent tasks that have to be done in the one year that is left before the 2010 elections. The first is to complete the purging of the voters' list. We may have an automated poll system but if the voters' list is not clean, the poll results will not reflect the real will of the people. There are 45 million registered voters, and of this number, about one-tenth, or roughly 4 million, have been struck off the voters' registry. Among those who were purged were dead voters, "flying" voters and "ghost" or nonexistent voters.

The biometric registration of voters remains uncompleted despite the expenditure of P1 billion on the project since 2004. The Commission on Elections will have to redouble its efforts to finish cleaning up the voters' registry before May 2010.

The second urgent project is to automate the poll system, and here the Comelec will have to make haste carefully. Tests have to be conducted and safeguards installed to ensure that automated cheating does not occur in 2010.

Some of the things the Comelec may have to do to make the automated poll system foolproof:

■ Hire enough information technology experts to oversee the 2010 elections. Former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod has expressed the fear that if the responsibility for counting and canvassing is handed over to "software specialists," they could manipulate the results.

■ A paper trail must be provided. A draft election return should be printed out after the Board of Election Inspectors has uploaded the results to the server.

■ Stand-alone machines should be preferred. Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr., president of Systems Sciences Consult Inc., said that if the machines are not stand-alone, a modified program could be downloaded on Election Day that would add votes for certain candidates and subtract from others, resulting in an electronic "dagdag-bawas" (add-subtract) scam.

■ The counting machines should not be equipped with any communication capability. Alcuaz said that if the counting machines can send electronic election returns to the municipal servers, a person who knows the system well could change the programs on the machine from a remote and undetected location.

After decades of suffering with an antiquated system that took weeks to determine the election winners, the nation may at last get to know the poll results in two or three days. But safeguards have to be taken to ensure that an automated poll system does not result in bigger and worse poll cheating.

Obstruction of decency

Could Ted Failon have had a hand in his wife's death?

Well, if he were somehow involved in the shooting, it would mean that everybody, from his kids to his in-laws, from his maids to his drivers, must be in on it given their eagerness to find him innocent. Their friends too since they've all testified that Trinidad was overwrought in past days, offering the authorities the suicide angle. That means conspiracy and premeditation.

But if so, why after all the planning and calculation would you go on and murder your spouse right in your own bathroom and try to get rid of the evidence this way? To believe in Failon's guilt is to invest him with both too much imagination and too little. It is to make him too clever to escape detection and too dumb to commit a crime this way.

Of course stranger things have happened. But the even stranger thing is the way the Quezon City police handled the case. Two things are particularly shocking even for a public inured to shock.

One is the arrest en masse of Failon's in-laws and hired help. Of course Failon's staff corrupted the death scene—the word "crime scene" has been repeatedly used by the police, invoking CSI, but it's a dangerous phrase presuming as it does that a crime had indeed taken place. Police officials now say that if only Failon's staff hadn't done that, they might have determined at once the real cause of death, and exonerated Failon.

That reasonableness was not what the world witnessed. What the world witnessed was the eagerness of the police to arrest and harass Failon and family. The cleaning of the toilet was truly a mistake, but it does not by itself justify arrest. If the police had paid attention to their "CSI," they would have known that in other countries the police question witnesses, including erring ones, right at the scene. It is only when the witnesses refuse to answer that the cops say, "We can do this here or in the precinct—your choice."

Failon's maids did answer the cops' questions. They cleaned the bathroom on their own, they said,

without Failon ordering them to do so to spare Failon's 12-year-old the trauma of seeing her mother in that state. The cops say they arrested them anyway because their stories did not jibe with each other. But of course they wouldn't. Or not completely. You get two reporters, people trained to observe, to describe a scene and you will get two different sets of details. You get descriptions that jibe perfectly, that's when you ought to get suspicious.

Two is the manhandling of Failon's in-laws and staff. Police officials now also say that was unfortunate but it was provoked by the arrestees resisting arrest, thus compounding obstruction of justice. Again that reasonableness was not what the world witnessed. What the world witnessed in fact was a bunch of goons in uniforms who had gotten used to getting away with murder—not completely figuratively, Failon having criticized their recent penchant for rubbing off suspects—trying to get away with, well, murder.

There was a similar case in the United States recently. NFL player Ryan Moats had rolled through a red light on his way to a hospital in Dallas and he was accosted by Officer Robert Powell in the parking lot. Moats explained that he was in a rush as his mother-in-law was dying in the hospital. He needed to be at his wife's side at that moment. Though Powell's partner confirmed the fact at the reception desk, Powell continued to detain him. When Moats protested, Powell drew his gun and waved it at him, shouting, "I can screw you over." Unfortunately for Powell, the whole scene was caught on hospital cameras.

The Dallas police department suspended Powell and apologized to Moats. Powell went on to resign before he could be fired.

Powell's actions were nothing compared to what the cops did to Failon's in-laws. Powell did not know at first that Moats' mother-in-law was dying.



There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The Quezon City cops did. They arrested Failon's in-laws right at Trinidad's bedside, dragging them out of the hospital and shoving them to a waiting van. That is inexcusable in any civilized society, let alone one pretending to be democratic. Unfortunately for them, their actions were caught by network cameras.

The Quezon City police department says it has fired the four cops that did the manhandling. We can only hope they do not rematerialize elsewhere, in promoted form. But the department has yet to admit its mistake and apologize to Failon and his family.

Indeed, it has yet to stop persecuting them. One is tempted to say that the cops' guiding principle here is not that Failon et al. are innocent until proven guilty but that they are guilty until proven innocent. But it's more than that. The cops are as ferociously resolved to find them guilty, which they showed from the very start, as they are ferociously resolved to find anyone under the protection of Malacañang innocent.

In the end, that is Failon's crime. It is not that he may have murdered his wife, for which there is no evidence, it is that he has stuck a thorn in the side of the cops and their bosses, for which there is much evidence. In this country today, that is the biggest crime there is, punishable by lethal interdiction.

Fortunately for Failon—and this country—what happened to him may yet revive the public from its comatose state, to go by the text messages I got last Thursday from friends who watched the evening news. One said: "I saw what the police did to Ted Failon's family. Grabe! I don't know Failon, but what they did to him is too much! What can we do to help them get fair treatment?" A question another answered by yet another question: "How long are we going to tolerate this abuse?!"

It's time we ourselves arrested some people for obstruction of decency.

History in the eyes of women

Each term I assign my students to visit the microfilm section of the library and dig up the newspaper on the day they were born. I know students hate being sent to the library to physically handle a book that unfortunately is not available on the Internet. But the visit is a chore most of them actually enjoy. The aim of the exercise is to make them experience historical research and writing. Students are also asked to interview their parents to find out what they remember so they end up learning an important lesson—that parents can be an unreliable source of information!

For this column I go back in time like my students, except that I travel at least a century back to see how much we have changed or not. Some people think that history is biased in favor of men because most of the primary sources being used by historians were written for and by men. Thus a feminist school of thought tries to remedy the situation by trying to let us see history from a different point of view, from historical sources for and by women. Rabid feminists even want to change history which they claim is unfairly masculine, into something current and politically correct. They insist we should remember her-story instead. As if that wasn't enough, the so-called "third sex" wants equal space in the past, thus causing yet another paradigm shift they call "Queer-story." The only problem is that gays and lesbians are quite invisible in history. One can only wonder what new school of thought will come next.

One of the her-story accounts of the Philippines is "An Ohio Woman in the Philippines" by Emily Bronson Conger (1904) who spent time in Jaro, Iloilo. Although her impressions of the country and its people are over a century old, these are not stale but surprisingly current and engaging. The 23rd chapter of the book is on domestic life and begins:

"The houses are made of bamboo; some of them are pretty, quite artistic; the plain ones cost about

seventy-five cents each; no furniture of any kind is needed. The native food is rice, or as it is called in the vernacular, 'sow-sow.' It is cooked in an earthen pot set upon stones with a few lighted twigs thrust under it for fire. When it is eaten with nature's forks, the fingers, with a relish of raw fish, it is the chief article of diet.

"House cleaning is one thing that I never saw in practice or evidence. I took a supply of lye with me and it was a huge joke to see the natives use it in cleaning the floors.

"The windows are made of oyster shells which are thin and flat; these, cut in three-inch squares, make a window particularly adapted to withstand the heavy storms and earthquakes; it transmits pleasant opalescent light.

"Coffee is raised, but not widely used by the natives; they prefer chocolate. After many unsuccessful attempts, I gave up trying to have my dishes washed in my way; I soon discovered that the servants used the tea towels on their bodies. This convinced me, and I let them wash mine as they did their own, by pouring water on each dish separately, rinsing and setting to dry on the porch in the sun, the only place where the vermin would not crawl over them.

"The irons used for pressing clothes are like a smooth, round-bottomed skillet, the inside is filled with lighted sticks and embers. The operator who sits on the floor, presses this smoking mass over the thing to be pressed. The article, when finished, looks as if it had been sat upon."

Unlike most expatriates who did not adapt and complained a lot, Conger was more flexible and seemed to have enjoyed her stay in Iloilo even if you get a sense that the Philippine-American War was always in the background. She had to take an



Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

interpreter and an armed guard when she traveled about to protect her against the "insurrectos." The irons she described are not in use today and can be found in antique shops where they are sold as either plant holders (large ones) or ashtrays (small ones). You will find capiz shell windows only in old houses and nowhere will you find a hut that costs 75 cents today. Coffee shops abound throughout the country for a people whose tastes have shifted from

thick Spanish chocolate to frappuccinos. We are slowly being warned against the dangers of smoking tobacco and some places like Makati have no-smoking ordinances for public spaces. Yet in Iloilo, Conger found children smoking:

"Nearly all little children are naked. One day I saw a little fellow, about three years old, who was suffering severely from the smallpox. He was smoking a huge cigar of the kind the natives make by rolling the natural tobacco leaf and tying it with a bit of bamboo fiber. He did look ridiculous. A native teacher told me that they all begin to smoke when [they are] about two years old; poor, little, stunted, starved things, fed on half-cooked rice and raw fish."

Of course, Conger brought to her writing her Ohio background and saw the Philippines from her American viewpoint. But what is striking in her book is the sympathy for the poor. Much of the things she described in the early 1900s are no more but the poor remaining the same.

We often think that the Philippines has changed a lot in the past century, reading travel accounts like that of Conger's makes us realize how much it remains unchanged.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

FROM DEBT THEY CAN'T PART

OFW debts pile up as global crisis drags on

By JEREMAIAH M. OPINIANO
and ISAGANI DE LA PAZ
WWW.OFWJOURNALISM.NET

MAKATI CITY, Philippines—Ramones Caytiles's stint in Taiwan is as short as the song-length of his namesake American punk rock band: two weeks.

But nearly six months now since he and 171 fellow workers got pink slips last year from their employer Hanston Display Corp., Caytiles feels life is as long as Don Maclean's *American Pie* song.

It was Nov. 19, Caytiles recalls, when their music—the crinkle of New Taiwan dollar—died.

"When we arrived in Taiwan, we borrowed money to pay fees to a broker who paid for our travel," Caytiles said, adding such was the standard process for workers trying their luck outside the Philippines.

He and five other OFWs sent back after LCD manufacturer Hanston downsized are now saddled with that debt from Taiwan-based lending agencies eCash and Paylite Financing.

Caytiles said they were focused on working and earning they didn't think the Kaohsiung, Taiwan LCD manufacturer would get hit by the economic catatonia seeping from the United States.

And if it did, he said they didn't expect the time between working in Taiwan and getting laid-off would be that fast.

"You left the country riddled with debt, and then you came back home still saddled with debt—causing an even bigger problem," said Caytiles, a single parent (his wife left him and his daughter some years ago).

Caytiles's fate marks the lives of millions of OFWs in labor-importing countries whose real sectors are getting hit by the collapse of the global financial system that began in the U.S. housing sector.

So says economists like for-

mer budget secretary Benjamin Diokno.

Diokno has become a prophet of doom since the start of the year, noting that May would be the month countries in Asia like the Philippines would feel the impact of the financial crisis that has coursed through the so-called "transmission channels."

One of these channels, credit lines, has plugged lending to the electronics export industry, a flagship for most Asian economies like the Philippines.

Grim reaper

In his presentation to journalists last March, Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. president Ernesto B. Santiago presented a grim outlook on worldwide industrial production as traditional lending windows shutter.

Santiago ticked off global companies announcing they were affected by the downturn in consumer electronics downturn: Sony (to shed 8,000 jobs); Philips (6,000); NEC (20,000); Panasonic (15,000); Pioneer (10,000); IBM (2,800); TDK (8,000); Nokia (2,500); Motorola (13,000); Sprint Nextel (8,000); and AT&T (12,000).

Closer to home, the closure of Intel Corp.'s Cavite manufacturing by May would see thousands of Filipinos losing a steady source of income.

"Countries that are heavily dependent on electronics have been the worst affected (notably the NIEs, Philippines, and Malaysia, but also China), followed by commodity exporters (notably Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Mongolia, PNG and Vietnam), exporters of capital equipment (all NIEs) and the garment manufacturers," a recent World Bank report said.

"There will be higher unemployment abroad and here at home," Diokno said, "and this means less jobs, less jobs, and less jobs."

Table 1: Local jobs generated and overseas workers deployed

Year	Domestic employment data (all in 000) Based on end-October figures of the Labor Force Survey						Overseas employment data (in 000)	Difference between local jobs generated and deployed overseas workers per year		
	Employment		Unemployment		Underemployment					
	Employed (in 000)	Rate	Unemployed (in 000)	Rate	Underemployed (in 000)	Rate				
2005	32,876	92.6	2,620	7.4	6,970	21.2	—	—		
2006	33,185	92.7	2,621	7.3	6,761	20.4	309,000	1,062		
2007	33,671	93.7	2,248	7.4	6,104	18.1	436,000	1,077		
2008	34,533	93.2	2,525	6.8	6,028	17.5	861,000	1,376		
								27.76		
								0.515 million		

Data sources: Labor Force Surveys (2005 to 2008, all October) and deployment data from the POEA

Caytiles said he was imagining kicking himself in the back while listening to Diokno.

"I think before workers should go overseas, they should know the situation that is happening—or if their employer is still steady," Caytiles's colleague Elwood Yambao said.

The father of two based in Olongapo City, which hosted an American air base a century ago, said that knowledge he could've gotten by reading newspapers.

But the overseas labor market is tough enough, and when potential OFWs like Yambao do access news sources, it's for securing work.

That is still in their minds right now, according to Yambao, because they are hounded by their lenders of their debts amounting to between P60,000 (US\$1,250) and P80,000 (\$1,667) each.

He said they filed a case against their agency to at least get back the placement fees they paid for work contracts in Taiwan.

Under Philippine Overseas Employment Administration regulations, OFWs who did not finish their contracts can file for some claims to their recruitment agencies. Manila-based recruitment agency Grand Placement and General Services Corp. brokered Yambao and his five co-workers for the Taiwan jobs.

We haven't paid yet the Tai-

wanese lender since we're still jobless, Yambao said in a short message via mobile phone.

In the meantime, Yambao said they feel immobile.

We went to Manila to check out that recruiter claiming he's not requiring payment of placement fees, he added.

Other than that, he said they're staying put in their respective homes in the provinces.

Caytiles, for one, has gone back to his farm in Sibalom, Antique, southern Philippines.

Slo-mo

If the Ramones band was known for its blitzkrieg hit songs, Caytiles notes government support to displaced OFWs like him is like a slow-motion dance.

Deputy administrator Hans Leo Cacdac of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration said Caytiles's and Yambao's cases require having these "heard through conciliation proceedings" so that some placement fees can be recovered.

Another government employee said displaced workers like Caytiles and Yambao can apply for public training grants on entrepreneurship and livelihood loans for small businesses.

It is a package totaling 60,000 pesos (\$1,250 at US\$1=P48), explains Teresita Manzala of the DOLE's National Reintegration Center for OFWs.

"We need to repay our debt quickly," Yambao said adding that meeting the documentary requirements of OWWA only "means additional expenses for us."

The labor department's Bureau of Local Employment said it is trying to find companies that may have vacancies in the domestic market.

Government's Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, on the other hand, said it will train displaced local and overseas workers on identified lines of businesses, as well as retraining workers on certain skills.

The labor department's online job search websites, meanwhile, reports 753,719 overseas job orders needing to be filled while local job openings run to 46,300 as of end-January this year.

Looking at the end-October 2008 data of the quarterly Labor Force Survey, the Philippines generated some 861,000 local jobs last year; the government deployed 1,376,823 newly-hired and re-hired overseas workers in 2008.

Amid the global economic crisis, the Philippines had a record-low 6.8 percent unemployment rate in 2008, as well as a record-high 34.533 million employed Filipino workers that same year.

Since 2005, the government's statisticians included overseas

Filipino workers as among the "employed" in the Philippine labor force as mandated by the International Labor Organization. But since that time, the number of local jobs generated cannot outpace annually-rising overseas employment numbers.

In a presentation to business journalists last March, Labor Undersecretary Rosalinda D. Baldoz said of the total 6,406 displaced workers as of March 12, 2009, 4,197 reported Taiwan as host country while 1,357 came from the United Arab Emirates.

However, reports of local workers retrenched daily have gone down by 40 from 437 during the first week of March to only 397 as of March 16, 2009.

From October last year to March 16, 2009, Baldoz said a total of 109,529 workers were affected by the global economic crunch. Nearly 11 percent of this number or 11,574 workers were permanently displaced (10.6%) while 38,806 reported to be temporarily laid-off (35.4 percent). A greater number or 59,149 were reported to be in flexible work arrangements.

The World Bank paints grim pictures in its latest update on the effects of the global slowdown.

"As unemployment in the region and around the world begins to climb, migrant workers, wherever they are, are likely to be among the first to lose their jobs," the report titled *Battling the forces of global recession* said.

"This will mean lower remittance flows to the poorest countries in the region and, if the migrants return home, a worsening unemployment in those countries as well as further downward pressure on real wages, especially in the informal sector that would directly affect the poor," added the report, released early April. (*OFW Journalism Consortium*)



BIRTHDAY GIRL

Happy birthday greetings go out to Jackie Payopay, who is celebrating her birthday today, April 25, 2009. Greetings come from Chielo, Ailene, Mae-Anne, Malen, and Flora.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CAREER FAIR

Staff of the International Business and Professional College entertain inquiries at their booth during NMC's Career Fair on Thursday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

YoungStyle

Something to think about

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Does a tree make a sound when it falls in the forest if nobody is around to hear it?

You may think the answer is a no-brainer. But, actually, it has been debated among philosophers since ancient times.

What's a philosopher?

Imagine a job where all you do is think—and then think some more. Philosophers are people who try to answer questions about human life and thought.

Philosophy is not a subject like math or spelling. You can't look for the right answers in the back of the textbook. Different philosophers can look at one question and come up with different ways of dealing with it.

Kids make great philosophers because they are curious; they wonder and they ask a lot of questions.

David A. White, a philosophy teacher, wrote a book called "Philosophy for Kids," and here are some of the questions he poses. Look at how famous philosophers answer—and feel free to disagree!

Q: Should you ever tell a lie?

You've probably been told many times to never tell a lie.

But you also may believe it is OK to lie in certain circumstances. For example, you might think it was OK to tell your best friend that you like her new dress when you really don't. Or to lie to save someone's life.

Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher who lived from 1724 to 1804, would disagree. To Kant, it was never OK to lie.

He said it was always important to do the right thing for the right reason. Lying is wrong, and doing something bad to achieve something good is not rational. Kant said you would be hurting yourself if you lied, even if to help others.

Can you think of examples of when you think a lie would be OK?

Q: Does a tree make a sound if it falls when no one hears it?

We bet you answered this with a yes or a no.

But Irish philosopher George Berkeley, who lived from 1685 to 1753, has another response: You can't know for sure!

And they're off: Kids begin pedometer race

By KATHLEEN HOM
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Can an animated online school bus filled with horses inspire kids to go outside and get some exercise? The Humana Foundation, the philanthropic wing of the health benefits company Humana, hopes so.

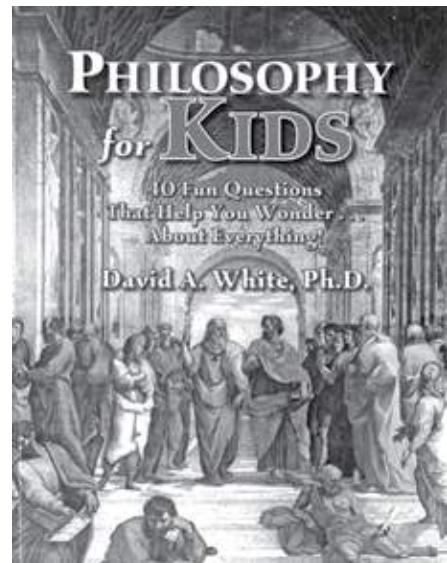
The foundation came to Capitol Hill this month to launch the Ameri-

Berkeley was a bishop in the Anglican Church. He believed that you can't be sure of anything unless it is perceived—that is, unless you are made aware of something through your senses (hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling).

Can you think of something you know will continue to exist even if it is not perceived by anyone?

Q: Can a computer think?

Let's say a computer can write a



THE WASHINGTON POST

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What makes hair straight or curly

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Hair is something that people of all ages spend a lot of time thinking about.

It is one of the first things you notice about yourself when you look in the mirror to get ready for school. And it is one of the first things you see about other people.

Hair is also the body part that many people try to change the most. People with naturally straight hair often wish their hair were curly. And curly tops want straight locks.

So why wasn't everyone born with the hair they wanted? Scientists say a number of factors contribute to the way your hair looks.

One reason involves the size and shape of a key part of your



THE WASHINGTON POST

Philosophy is not a subject like math or spelling. You can't look for the right answers in the back of the textbook. Different philosophers can look at one question and come up with different ways of dealing with it. Famous philosophers include, from left, Immanuel Kant, George Berkeley and René Descartes.

poem. Or beat the world champion in chess. Or even make itself move.

Would you then say that the computer can think?

American philosopher Daniel Dennett, who was born in 1942, would say that the answers depend on your definition of "thinking." That may seem simple to you, but it is something that philosophers and scientists have debated for a long time.

In fact, Dennett would replace the concept of "thinking" with "consciousness." He would ask, "Is the way human beings are conscious any different from the way a computer doing creative things is conscious?"

Of course, the key to the answer is the definition of "consciousness." And that, too, is something still being debated.

Can you think of something a computer would have to do for you to say it was conscious?

Q: Can you doubt that

you exist?

This question may seem silly. But French philosopher René Descartes, who lived from 1596 to 1650, is known as the father of modern philosophy because of his thinking about this issue.

It all has to do with the notion of certitude. That means being absolutely certain something is true.

Descartes wanted absolute certainty to be the basis of philosophical truths. So he started out by doubting everything.

Most famously, he asked whether it was possible to doubt that he existed. He concluded that if he was doubting his existence, then he must exist, or he couldn't be doubting.

He summed that up in one of the most famous philosophical statements: "I think, therefore I am." In Latin it is "Cogito ergo sum."

Now go to school and say that to your teacher and watch the delighted reaction!

looks of hair.

There are other factors, too, some of which can change over time.

That's why some kids born with super-curly hair find that their hair straightens out later in life.

Lots of people use products to change the design of their hair.

Some use hair irons to straighten curly hair, though it lasts only until the next wash.

Others use chemicals to straighten hair or curl it. The effects of those efforts last longer, but they, too, are only temporary.

As hair grows (about six inches a year) and time goes on, the chemical changes fade, and your natural hair comes back.

So the best thing to do is learn to love the hair you've got. For most of you, it's better than none at all!

Louisville, home of the Kentucky Derby; the current challenge is open to 2,000 fifth- and sixth-graders from various states, including Virginia, along with 20 members of Congress.

The schools that were chosen include a significant number of students from lower-income communities. "These are high-need schools," says Virginia Judd, the foundation's executive director, where "there's likely to be a need to have reliable health information."

This sport really rocks

By FRED BOWEN
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Lots of kids love to climb. Little ones climb on furniture even though grown-ups tell them not to. Older kids scramble up rocks and sand dunes at the beach or climb on jungle gyms at the park.

But did you know that climbing is a competitive sport? I spoke to Mike Lyons, the head climbing coach at the Earth Treks Climbing Centers. Lyons grew up playing football and running cross country in Ohio, and now he coaches climbing. His teams, which include boys and girls ages 9 to 19, travel around the country and sometimes the world to compete in indoor and outdoor rock climbing competitions. I met Lyons under the 50-foot climbing walls at the Earth Treks center in Rockville, Md. Here's what he told me about climbing.

Q: How did you get into climbing?

A: When I was about 14 years old, a cousin took me to an indoor climbing gym. I practiced inside for a while and then started rock climbing outdoors.

Q: What did you like about climbing?

A: I liked climbing right away. It was a great feeling to be on something so big with just your body weight holding you to the surface. And there was a real rush to be up so high and look down.

Q: Is climbing scary?

A: It's like the first time you ice skate or ski. It's a little scary at first if you haven't done it. But the more you climb, the less scary it becomes.

Q: Is climbing dangerous?

A: If you are in the wrong situation, such as rock climbing with people who don't know what they are doing, climbing can be dangerous. At an indoor facility, however, the instructors are trained, and the equipment and the procedures make climbing very safe. Because of the ropes and harnesses, a climber can only fall a couple feet if they slip off the wall.

Q: What does it take to be a good climber?

A: You have to be someone who is willing to try new things. Climbing is a bit like gymnastics. You are going to feel a little uncomfortable at first, and you will have to try to make moves that are above your level. You also have to make a commitment to get in better shape; remember, you use your whole body in climbing.

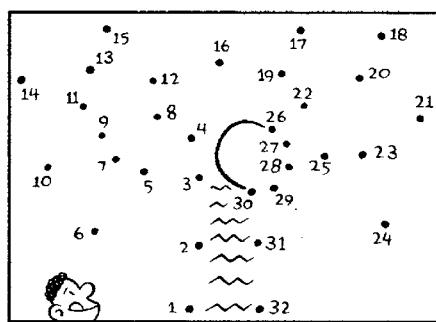
Q: What should a kid do if he or she wants to start climbing?

A: Go to an open climb session at a local climbing gym. You will pay a fee for a certain number of climbs. That way you can find out if you like the sport.

Q: What is a good age to start climbing?

A: I have had kids as young as 5 years old start climbing. But for most kids, it's good to start somewhere between 9 and 12 years.

Bowen is an author of sports novels for kids.



DO YOU KNOW what nut is a pleasant winter's drink? Connect the dots and find out!

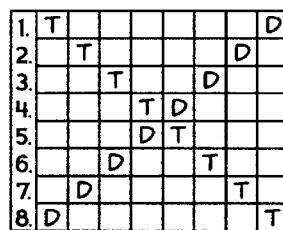
Answer: COCONUT

A LUCKY PROBLEM! Professor Flunkum challenges you to write a math expression, using seven 7's, that will equal 100. You have seven minutes to pass this test.

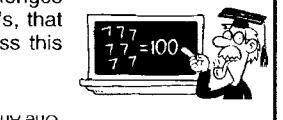
One Answer: $(7 \times 7) + (7 \times 7) + (7 \times 7) = 49 + 49 + 2 = 100$.

CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.

Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Dirk, dirt, dins, den, dens, debts, debt.



Illustrated by David Coulson



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FIND THE BIG WORDS



Using the definitions and anagrams below, find the eight eight-letter words that fit into the framework on the left. For each definition, the letters in the two anagram words must be unscrambled and used to form the word asked for.

DEFINITIONS:

- What you get for speeding. teed + tick
- A military base jail. odes + tack
- No longer in fashion. duet + mood
- A nuclear plant accident. town + meld
- A tough biscuit. dart + hack
- Seaward pull of waves. rude + town
- To argue in favor of. toad + cave
- Type of door lock. load + debt

ANAGRAM:

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MAGIC MAZE ● DO WORDS AND PHRASES

T Q N J F C Y V R O L H E B X
U R O L I E B Y Y V S Q N K H
O O E B Y W T Z R O L J D G E
B D D Y W U O O R O P A N K I
G D R E B O D V Z D D X V S Q
O M R I D N T E K O I G O E C
A Y W E A P U R O T U S D Q P
N L R C O H O D O T L L E W J
M O O D Y D W O H A H F K E C
A N Y X N V U S H H Q P A N M
K J H U F E C B Z W Y X M V U

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Ado	Doozy	Outdo	Well-to-do
Doer	Howdy-do	Overdo	What to do
Doodad	Make do	Redo	Whoop-de-do
Doom	No can do	Undo	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

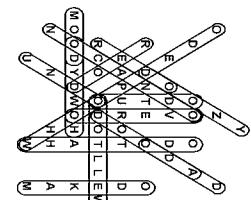
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		+		25
+		÷		x	
	+		x		15
x		+		-	
	+		+		22
25		16		12	

1 2 3 4 5 5 7 8 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



DO WORDS AND PHRASES

GO FIGURE ANSWER

25	+	9	+	8	22
x	+		x	5	15
2	+	1	x	4	25
	+	÷			
3	x	7	+	4	

Thought for the Day: "Writing is the only profession where no one considers you ridiculous if you earn no money."—Jules Renard

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Renters should respect landlords' pet rules

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I own two townhouses, which I rent out to tenants. In the lease I specify that no pets are allowed; however, I will sometimes let a tenant keep a small animal such as a cat or toy dog, as I understand it can be hard to find affordable housing that accepts pets.

I will be stopping that practice after my current tenants leave. Why? Because almost every time I have given permission for a pet to be kept, the tenant has abused my kindness by either bringing in additional pets, or by not cleaning up after their pet and causing hundreds or thousands of dollars in damages.

I hate to turn pet owners away, but from now on I will have to—I can't keep spending money to remodel these damaged and stinky townhouses. Please tell your readers that if they are renting, they need to be responsible tenants and follow the rules set out in the lease!—Grumpy Landlord in Boulder, Colo.

DEAR GRUMPY: Well, you told 'em, and I agree. I know it can be difficult to find a rental home or apartment that accepts pets, but it is important to be upfront and honest with landlords or property managers. Sometimes a compromise can be worked out, but pet owners must keep their end of the bargain.



Some issues can't be avoided, such as pet fur collecting in the corners or a dog that barks occasionally. But keeping the unit clean and odor-free, making sure pets are well-behaved and healthy, not keeping more pets than are allowed—these are essential elements to maintaining a good relationship with the landlord, and in the long run, increasing the number of landlords willing to rent to pet owners. Don't mess it up for other pet owners by failing to follow rental rules.

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Thrifty taco soup is a big hit

Donna's Day Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson



1 dollop sour cream for garnish (optional)

In a skillet, brown the ground beef with the chopped onions. Drain any excess fat. Transfer the beef and onions to a stockpot and add the beans, corn, tomatoes, tomato sauce and seasoning. Simmer for an hour on low heat. Or, cook in a slow cooker on Low for five to six hours.

To serve: Ladle into bowls and top with crushed tortilla chips, shredded cheese and sour cream. Prepare a green salad on the side, if you wish.

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

(c) 2009 Donna Erickson
Distributed by King Features Synd.

Life & Style

Reggaeton star Flex wins 8 Latin Billboards

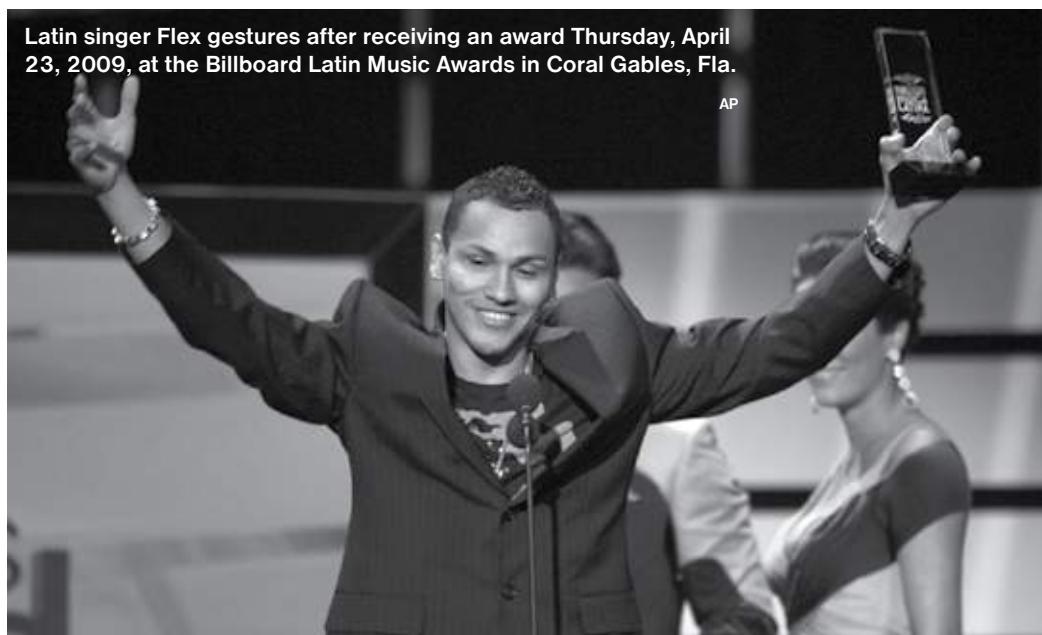
CORAL GABLES, Fla. (AP)—Panamanian reggaeton sensation Flex won eight awards, and Spanish pop singer Enrique Iglesias took home six at the Billboard Latin Music Awards on Thursday night.

Flex's album "Te Quiero (I Love You)," which skyrocketed to number one on Billboard magazine's charts shortly after its release, won top Latin album of the year. The hit single of the same name won seven other awards, including hot Latin song of the year and tropical airplay song of the year.

"Wow. This award is for the one who's larger than this world and that's God Almighty," Flex said. "This is also for my Pan-

Latin singer Flex gestures after receiving an award Thursday, April 23, 2009, at the Billboard Latin Music Awards in Coral Gables, Fla.

AP



manian public, and for my Latin American people."

Flex later performed the winning song, wearing a black jacket and cap and dancing on stage with a group of women in silver tight outfits and net stockings.

Iglesias, who's touring in Europe to promote his latest greatest hits album "95/08", not only surprised audiences by accepting his first two awards of the night via satellite from Minsk, Belarus, but also performing "Lloro por ti (I'm Crying For You)" thousands of miles away.

"I'd like to give many thanks to all my fans for their support in the past 14 years," he said, donning a dark-green cap and scarf.

"I respect Billboard magazine

very much. I've been reading it since I was a kid—it's the bible of music."

The singer's chart-climbing song "Donde Estan Corazon (Where Are You, My Heart?)" earned him top honors, including male Latin pop airplay song of the year.

Mexican guitarist Carlos Santana, whose rock, salsa and jazz fusion has reinvented the musical culture for more than 40 years, was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award. Mexican rock band Mana, which walked away with four awards, joined Santana on stage for a performance that left audiences roaring with cheer as Santana sprung on a sparkling, green guitar.

Cannes Fest names 20 films in competition

PARIS (AP)—This year's Cannes film festival will pit a roster of festival veterans, including four former winners of the glamorous film competition's top prize, against challengers from emerging cinema hotbeds from China to the Philippines.

Quentin Tarantino, Ken Loach, Jane Campion and Lars von Trier, each of whom has won top honors at the prestigious festival on the French Riviera, are all presenting their newest films

in the competition scheduled to run from May 13 to 24.

Tarantino, who won the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or, for "Pulp Fiction" in 1994, is in the competition with "Inglourious Basterds," an action flick starring Brad Pitt featuring Jewish soldiers dishing out chaos among the Nazis.

Festival President Gilles Jacob said the 62nd edition of the Cannes festival would focus particularly on independent cinema. Speaking at a news

conference in Paris, Jacob, who has been involved in shaping the festival's selection of films for over three decades, said he wanted to counter the idea that independent cinema was dead.

"There's a trend emerging, especially among certain Anglo-Saxon commentators, that takes as established fact the death of auteur cinema ...," Jacob said. "These films supposedly have no more viewers, so they are becoming extinct."

'Battle of the Bulge' director Annakin dies at 94

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ken Annakin, the British-born director whose credits included the World War II epics "Battle of the Bulge" and "The Longest Day" and the family classic "Swiss Family Robinson," has died. He was 94.

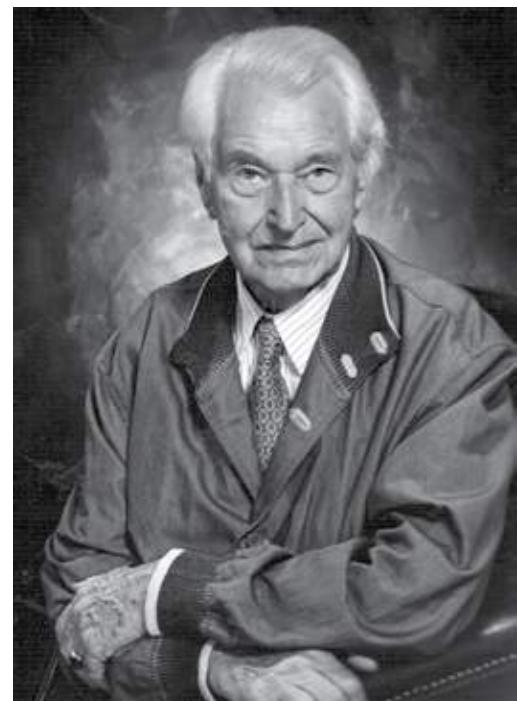
Annakin died Wednesday night at his Beverly Hills home, said his daughter, Deborah Peters. His health had been failing since he had a heart attack and stroke within a day of each other in February, she said.

Before he was stricken, Annakin had been in good health and always talked about making more movies, even though he had not directed since the early 1990s, his daughter said.

"He was absolutely fine, other than old age," Peters said. "He was walking and mobile, chatting and working, still trying to get films made. I don't think anybody like that ever really stops."

Annakin dabbled in many genres, from action comedies and family fare to crime drama and swashbuckling romance. He was best-known for his war sagas, 1965's "Battle of the Bulge" with Henry Fonda, Charles Bronson, Robert Shaw and Telly Savalas and 1962's "The Longest Day," which he co-directed with Andrew Marton and Bernhard Wicki.

Adapted from Cornelius Ryan's D-Day best-seller, "The Longest Day" featured an all-star cast led by Fonda, John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, Rod Steiger, Sean Connery and Peter Lawford.



This image provided by Deborah Peters shows Ken Annakin, the British-born director whose credits included the World War II epics "Battle of the Bulge" and "The Longest Day" and the family classic "Swiss Family Robinson," who died Wednesday April 22, 2009 in Beverly Hills, Calif. He was 94.

Indian police end probe of 'Slumdog' star's dad

MUMBAI, India (AP)—Indian police said Thursday they would not charge the father of a child star in the hit movie "Slumdog Millionaire," and ended their investigation into claims he tried to sell his 9-year-old girl to a reporter posing as a wealthy sheik.

Rubina Ali's estranged mother, Khurshid Monish Dewade, filed a complaint against the girl's father on Sunday, after the British

tabloid News of the World reported that he offered to give Ali up for adoption in exchange for \$400,000, police said.

The newspaper—owned by News International Ltd., the main British subsidiary of News Corp., which also owns "Slumdog" distributor Fox Searchlight Pictures—said the deal was allegedly offered to one of its reporters. The newspaper issued

a statement Thursday saying it stands by its story.

The father, Rafiq Qureshi, has denied any wrongdoing.

The accusations further complicated the lives of the families of the slum-dwelling child stars, who have come under intense scrutiny since the movie skyrocketed to Oscar-winning fame and grossed more than \$300 million worldwide.

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Fighting

Friday 4:15 7:30 10:00
Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 10:00
Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:30

Channing Tatum, Terrence Howard
Urban, Crime • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

Small-town boy Shawn MacArthur has come to New York City with nothing. Barely earning a living selling counterfeit goods on the streets, his luck changes when scam artist Harvey Boarden sees that he has a natural talent for streetfighting. When Harvey offers Shawn help at making the real cash, the two form an uneasy partnership. As Shawn's manager, Harvey introduces him to the corrupt bare-knuckle circuit, where rich men bet on disposable pawns.

17 Again

Friday 4:00 7:05 9:30
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:05 9:30
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:05

Zac Efron, Leslie Mann
Fantasy, Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

A middle-aged father wakes up to find he's seventeen again. So, he enrolls in the same high school as his children to be close to them. And in trying to recapture his best years, Mike could lose the best things that ever happened to him.

Crank: High Voltage

Friday 4:10 7:25 9:55
Saturday 1:15 4:10 7:25 9:55
Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:25

Jason Statham, Amy Smart
Action, Thriller, Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis

Hitman Chev Chelios is kidnapped by a mysterious Chinese mobster. Three months later, he wakes up to discover his nearly indestructible heart has been surgically removed and replaced with a battery-operated ticker that requires regular jolts of electricity in order to work. After a dangerous escape from his captors, Chev is on the run again, this time from the charismatic Mexican gang boss El Huron and the Chinese Triads, headed by the dangerous 100 year-old elder Poon Dong.

State of Play

Friday 4:20 7:10 9:45
Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:10 9:45
Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:10

Russel Crowe, Ben Affleck
Drama, Political • Rated PG 13

You Changed My Life

Friday 4:30 7:15 9:40
Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:40
Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:15

John Lloyd Cruz, Sarah Geronimo
Romance, Comedy • Rated NR

Fast & Furious

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:20

Vin Diesel, Paul Walker
Action, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Monsters vs. Aliens

Friday 4:05 7:00 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:00 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:00

Reese Witherspoon, Hugh Laurie
Action, Comedy, Animated • Rated PG

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Leno hospitalized with illness, cancels taping

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. (AP)—Jay Leno checked into a hospital with an undisclosed illness Thursday and canceled the taping of the “Tonight” show, but was doing well and planned to return next week, his publicist and NBC said.

Leno left his office at NBC’s studios about midday and checked himself into a hospital for observation, said his publicist, Dick Guttman. He would not identify what ailed Leno or where he went, but characterized his illness as “mild” and said the comedian continued working throughout the day, making phone calls and writing jokes.

“Jay Leno is doing just fine,” read a statement from NBC spokeswoman Tracy St. Pierre. “He was kidding around with the hospital staff and running his monologue jokes by the doctors and the nurses. He’s expected back to work on Monday.”

A woman who answered the media line at Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center, which is near the Burbank studio where Leno tapes “Tonight,” said they had no patient by that name, and referred inquiries to NBC.

The network planned to air



In this April 7, 2009 file photo, Jay Leno performs during a stand up show billed as “Jay’s Comedy Stimulus Plan” at the Palace in the Detroit suburb of Auburn Hills, Mich.

a rerun, the first time it had to cover for a sick Leno since he took over “Tonight” in 1992, St.

Pierre said. Guests scheduled for Thursday included “X-Men Origins: Wolverine” actor Ryan

Reynolds, celebrity animal trainer Jules Sylvester and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy.

“We wish Jay the speediest of recoveries and hope that our soundcheck this morning didn’t have anything to do with his illness or the cancellation of the show,” joked Chad Jensen, manager for Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. He said most of the guys in the swing band instead were “in the ocean surfing this afternoon.”

It was an unusual lapse for the famously intrepid performer, who routinely fills off-days from his TV show with live appearances on the comedy circuit.

Leno, who turns 59 on Tuesday, will leave the “Tonight” show May 29 after 17 years. But he will continue on NBC, with a Monday-through-Friday program at 10 p.m., starting in the fall.

The top-rated late-night host’s move to prime time created a stir in the industry, taking the time slot usually reserved by broadcast networks for dramas such as “ER.” And Leno has continued to make news, scoring a coup by booking President Barack Obama as a guest and performing free comedy concerts in the recession-wracked Detroit area.

Blagojevich comes to L.A. to plug reality show

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich said he came to Los Angeles to promote a reality show because he wants to support the project even though a judge barred him from traveling abroad for it.

Blagojevich was filming promotional spots Thursday for NBC’s “I’m a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!” in the Los Angeles Arboretum, a stand-in for the show’s Costa Rica jungle setting.

“Perhaps I can play some other role in the show,” he said, calling it “an exciting” concept.

He had hoped to be a contestant but a federal judge in Chicago this week refused to allow him to leave the country to do so.

Blagojevich, who was dressed in a suit and tie despite the outdoor setting, declined to say whether he was being paid for the promotional work. He’s set to attend a news conference Friday at which the show’s cast will be announced.

He’s pleaded not guilty to racketeering, fraud and other charges that allege—among other things—that he schemed to sell President Barack Obama’s former U.S. Senate seat.

Ousted Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich leaves federal court in Chicago, Tuesday, April 21, 2009, after a hearing to ask permission to go to Costa Rica to take part in a reality TV show, which U.S. District Judge James B. Zagel denied.

AP



‘The Rachel Zoe Project’ jumps the pond

fashion industry.

“It’s the epitome of street-chic cool,” she said.

The 37-year-old Zoe has made a name for herself dressing such celebrities as Anne Hathaway and Kate Hudson. And she’s busily developing her brand: Accessories and a fragrance will come first, followed by apparel.

Zoe shot down reports that she’s not involved in the design of her products. She insisted that “anything I’m putting my name on has to be something I would wear myself, something I would want to promote and be proud of, and something I would want to see people wearing.”

able life when “The Rachel Zoe Project” arrives on the Really lifestyle channel beginning May 19. It will air every night at 11 p.m. GMT. “Rachel Zoe” is also airing in Finland, Asia, Sweden and Norway. (The series’ second season premieres in the United States later this year.)

Zoe says she’s particularly excited about the deal because London is a major hub of the



Zoe

Miss Calif. receives strong support at Dove Awards

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Miss California Carrie Prejean received a swell of support at the Gospel Music Association’s Dove Awards with the crowd giving her a standing ovation when she came out to introduce a performance.

Prejean has drawn attention for her comments against gay

marriage at the Miss USA pageant, where she was first runner-up last weekend.

In response to a question from celebrity blogger Perez Hilton, the beauty queen said she believes marriage should be between a man and a woman. During the awards show

Thursday, she introduced a performance by Mercy Me of their hit “I Can Only Imagine.”

Prejean did not speak about the controversy during the show. Backstage, she said she had no regrets about her remarks and learned that “you have to stay true to your beliefs.”

Man’s busboy routine annoys and embarrasses his girlfriend

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, “Seth,” and I are in our mid-20s and have been dating for seven years. We have a solid relationship, but I need your thoughts on something: He insists on cleaning up after everyone right under their noses.

We were recently invited to watch a basketball game at a friend’s home. Appetizers were provided over the course of several hours. People kept losing their cups and plates because Seth “thought they were done” and threw the items away.

Abby, he was doing this in a house he had never visited before with people he had never met! He also does it with family instead of sitting and relaxing after the meal and enjoying the conversation. When we eat at a restaurant, Seth will pile up our plates and silverware as soon as he thinks I’m done “to make it easier for the server to clean up.”

Clearing the table was not a chore my boyfriend was assigned as a child, nor is he overly concerned with neatness in other areas of his life. He’s not shy around people, so he isn’t keeping busy to avoid conversation.

He says he is being polite. I say he could volunteer to help tidy up at the end of a party, but he shouldn’t touch other people’s eating utensils in the middle of an event. What do you think?

DATING MR. CLEAN IN NEW JERSEY



Dear Abby

DEAR DATING MR. CLEAN: It appears you are dating a frustrated busboy. I don’t know where your boyfriend got the idea that picking up other people’s dinnerware without first asking if they are finished is polite—because it isn’t. In fact, it’s rude.

I am also not as convinced as you are that your boyfriend is comfortable making conversation because he appears to be fixated on making “busy work” on social occasions—which could be an indication that he feels socially awkward.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a hardworking CPA, recovering from another busy tax season. Along with my colleagues, I become a little crazed during that frantic time of year. May I share some tips with your readers so next year their appointments will go more smoothly?

1. Feel free to answer your cell phone during our appointment. I have nothing else to do, so please don’t be concerned that you’re taking up extra time.

2. Do bring your small children along. Yes, they may be bored, but I love entertaining them instead of giving you my full attention.

3. By all means drop by without an appointment to ask a question. So what if I’m talking to another client! I don’t mind dropping what I’m doing to talk to you because, again, I’m not busy.

4. There is no need to expect to pay for our services when you pick up your tax return. After all, it’s not like buying a gallon of milk. And be assured I don’t mind putting your return ahead of all the others because you need your refund to go to the Caribbean. Of course you are more important than the conscientious clients who got their information here ahead of you.

5. The remaining 95 percent of my clients are a joy to work with, so don’t forget what put you in that 5 percent.

RECUPERATING IN ALABAMA

DEAR RECUPERATING: Your frustration is understandable, particularly since tax season has just ended, and I love your dry sense of humor. But any CPA who posted your “tips” would probably wind up working for tips.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in “What Every Teen Should Know.” To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



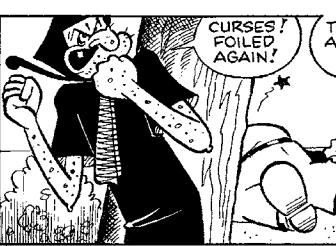
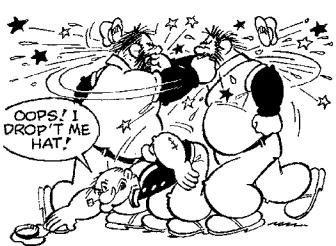
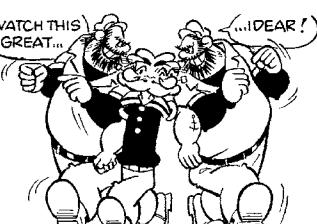
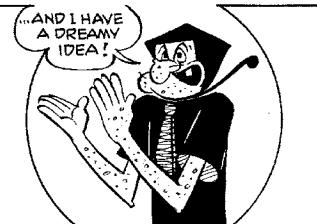
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Wishing Well®

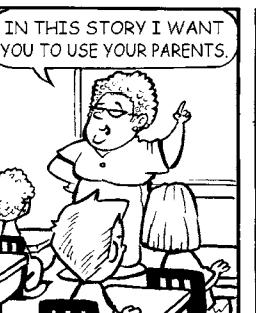
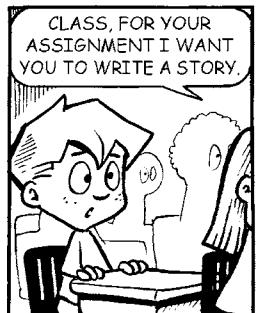
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HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message letters under the checked figures give you.

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Amber Waves



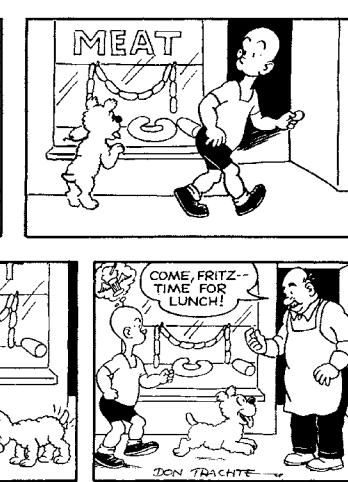
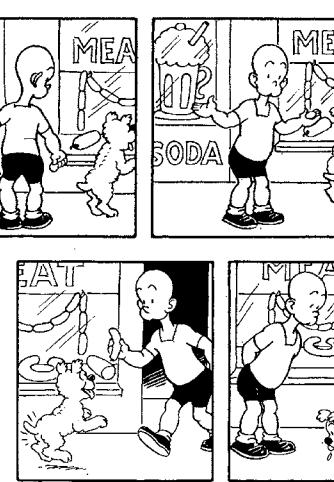
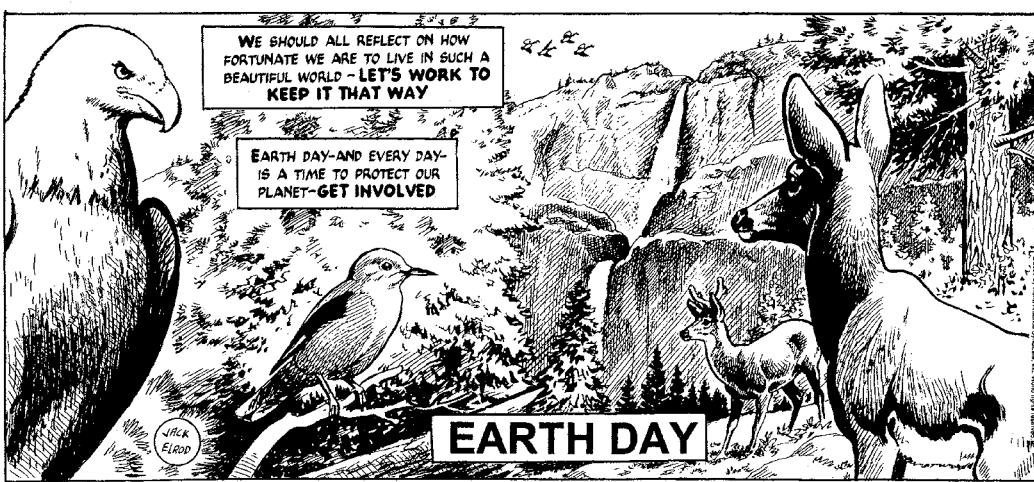
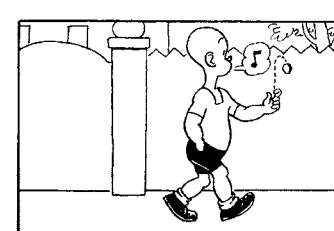
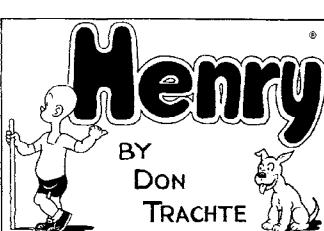
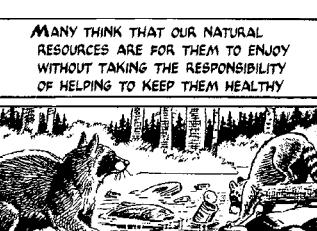
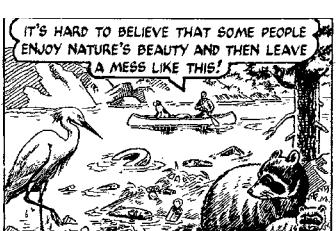
by Dave T. Phipps



The Spats



by Jeff Pickering



EARTH DAY

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FLIGHT MANUALS**Super Crossword**

1 Polish cake	51 "My word!"	104 Indifference	6 So out	43 Sock part	90 "The truth at last!"
6 Melodious McEntire	55 Won over	105 August one?	7 Vote in	44 Basic organism	93 Hibachi residue
10 Tower material?	58 Singer John	107 Religious belief	8 Hit hard	45 Battlefield doc	94 Rob Roy's refusal
15 Yak	61 Work like a horse	109 Big vein	10 Farmer's place	95 Adult	96 Coming from Cork
19 Mideastern airline	62 Slip cover?	110 1 Down, e.g.	52 Festive town	97 "Saving Private Ryan"	98 Solidarity extras
20 '28 Irving Berlin song	63 Mauna —	112 Adds a lane	53 Connecticut	99 Lunar spacecraft	100 Tire type
21 Antioxins	64 Soap ingredient	115 Bell and Barker	54 Moist	101 Swarm (with)	105 Swarm
22 Dashiel Hammett book	65 Actor's lunch?	118 Composer Siegmeister	55 Photo book	106 Surgical tool	107 Postpone
25 Evangelist Roberts	73 "Ask Girl" ('59 film)	119 Willa Cather	57 Annoy	108 Threshold	108 Threshold
26 Weild an axe	74 Main drag	123 Word with	59 Bring bliss	110 Food fish	111 Cuban currency
27 Hood or Tell	76 Mare's morsel	dance or drunk	60 At once	112 Yaphet of "Homicide"	112 Violinist Oistrakh
28 Have a hot dog	77 Textbook headings	124 Art supporter?	61 Present company?	113 Extinct bird	113 Christmas visitors
29 Woods dweller?	79 Senator Fong	125 — Neisse Line	64 Ridicule	116 Chip off Woody's block	116 Chip off Woody's block
30 Explorer Sebastian	80 Kathy of country	126 Tenor Beniamino	65 Very funny!	117 Rind	117 Rind
32 Choose, with "for."	83 Soildered or stapled	127 Internet acronym	66 Tel —	118 Actress Leonie	118 Actress Leonie
34 Actor Howard	87 Maintain	128 Put on a pedestal	67 Insignificant	119 Seville shout	119 Seville shout
36 "Mr. Television"	88 Splinter group	129 Actor Calhoun	69 Yaphet of "Homicide"	120 Self-esteem	120 Self-esteem
38 Leaded	89 Grandma	130 Burger topping	70 Toque or topee	121 Self-esteem	121 Self-esteem
40 Siouan people	91 Emulated	1 British city	71 Guitarist Eddy	122 China's — Biao	122 China's — Biao
42 Hair Haggerty	92 Agatha Christie book	2 Pain	72 Available		
43 Harper Lee book	98 Conflict	3 Make coffee	73 Meat cut		
48 Utah city	101 Rational	4 With 46 Down, "Vertigo" star	35 Always, to Arnold		
49 Dole (out)	102 Geometry calculation	5 Oklahoma city	36 Yesterday (day) (naive)		
50 Algerian seaport	103 "Rawhide" prop	62 Plaines, IL	37 Got by, with "out"		
		63 Plainses, IL	38 "Baloney!"		
		64 Stowe sight	39 Like some donuts		
		65 Corset part	86 — Plaines, IL		
		66	88		
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1. MOVIES: What was the name of the college that was the setting for "Animal House"?

2. AD SLOGANS: What product had the slogan, "They plump when you cook 'em."

3. AUTOS: What inspired Cadillac's iconic tail fins in the 1950s?

4. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What does the Ishihara test determine?

5. MUSIC: Who was the last musician to perform at the 1969 Woodstock music festival?

6. TELEVISION: What was Phoebe's twin sister's name on the sitcom "Friends"?

7. ANATOMY: How long does it take for a toenail or fingernail to grow from base to tip?

8. WEATHER: Most tornadoes in the U.S. form during what period of the year?

9. FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: Which 20th century comedian said, "Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city"?

10. GEOGRAPHY: What is the only Canadian province that borders the Great Lakes?

11. HISTORY: Who was the first president of the United States?

12. SCIENCE: What is the scientific name for a plant?

13. LITERATURE: Who wrote "The Great Gatsby"?

14. ART: Who painted the Mona Lisa?

CLASSIFIED ADS



CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)

	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$25
• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:

- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

HAYHAY
HAYHAY
BODKIN
HAYHAY
HAYHAY

Find today's solution in this section

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WHATZIT Solution: Needle in a haystack

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

House for Rent: 3 bedroom, 2 bath, full concrete. Located in Kagman III., walking distance to Kagman High School. For more information call 287-9080.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Right behind NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

AUTOMOTIVE

1994 Ford Explorer 4X4, 46k, no rust, excellent running condition, V6, AT, AC, PS, PDL, PSEAT, AM/FM CD, alloy rims, new tires. \$4,200 or OBO. Call 989-0002 for more info.

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Over the limit. Under arrest.

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated Bldg. 3BR & 2BT. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Backup generator. Free Wi-Fi. EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nighttime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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Boozer leads Jazz back into series vs Lakers



SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Deron Williams hit a fadeaway jumper with 2.2 seconds left to give Utah an 88-86 win over the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night, getting the Jazz back into the first-round playoff series.

Carlos Boozer tied a franchise playoff record with 22 rebounds and scored 23 points as the Jazz pulled within 2-1 in the series. Game 4 is Saturday night in Utah.

Williams finished with 13 points and nine assists, winning it with only his third field goal of the night.

The Lakers had a chance to win, but Kobe Bryant's 3-pointer at the buzzer was way off and the Jazz celebrated their first win of the postseason.

Lamar Odom led the Lakers with 21 points and 14 rebounds, and Bryant scored 18 despite going just 5-for-24 from the floor. Pau Gasol added 20 points and nine rebounds for the Lakers.

The Jazz avoided falling behind 3-0 in the series by winning a wild one. Both teams were sporadic, excelling one quarter and stalling the next. Utah regrouped after scoring just 17 in both the second and third quarters with an inspired fourth, outscoring the Lakers 28-18 and retaking the lead every time Los Angeles tied it down the stretch.

The Jazz took a two-point lead four times in the final two minutes and the Lakers finally ran out of time.

Odom tied it at 82 on a layup with 1:07 left, then Boozer put Utah back up with a layup 20 seconds later. Bryant tied it again with 28 seconds to go, then Boozer spun around Gasol for a dunk to give Utah the lead again with 16.9 seconds to go.

Gasol matched Boozer's dunk with his own to tie it again at 86 with 11.7 seconds



AP

Utah Jazz guard Deron Williams takes the game winning shot as Los Angeles Lakers forward Lamar Odom defends during the second half of game 3 of their NBA basketball first round playoff series Thursday April 23, 2009 in Salt Lake City.

remaining. After a timeout, Williams came through with a jumper after struggling with his shot most of the night.

Williams finished 3-for-7 and was just 7-for-12 from the foul line, but had more support Thursday than he had in the first two games of the series.

The Lakers shot 58 percent while taking a 2-0 series lead,

but the shots weren't falling most of Game 3. Los Angeles finished 32-for-87.

The Lakers shot 58 percent while taking a 2-0 series lead, but the shots weren't falling most of Game 3. Los Angeles finished 32-for-87 from the floor and was beaten to most of the missed shots as Utah pulled down 55 rebounds to the Lakers' 40.

Celtics 107, Bulls 86

At Chicago, Paul Pierce scored 24 points, Rajon Rondo added 20 and the defending champion Boston Celtics beat the Chicago Bulls to take a 2-1 lead in their first-round playoff series.

The teams split two dramatic games in Boston, but this one never really was in doubt. The Celtics led by 11 after one

quarter and 22 at the half on their way to an easy win.

Rondo looked just fine after spraining his right ankle in Game 2 and missing practice Tuesday, turning in another dominant postseason performance. Besides hitting eight of 15 shots, he had 11 rebounds and six assists. He's now averaging 22.7 points, 9.7 assists and 10.7 rebounds in the series.

The Bulls committed 22 turnovers, shot 37.5 percent from the field and were 17-of-27 at the line after going 46-of-51 in the first two games. Ben Gordon scored 15 on 5-of-13 shooting after pouring in 42 in Game 2, while John Salmons added 14.

Mavericks 88, Spurs 67

At Dallas, instead of delivering his guaranteed hard foul, Erick Dampier and the Dallas Mavericks slapped around the San Antonio Spurs with tight defense, the return of Dirk Nowitzki's shooting touch and the energy of their home crowd, turning it into a 2-1 lead in their first-round series.

Dampier drew the scrutiny of the league office for saying he would pop Tony Parker on his first drive of this game. Dampier ended up going the whole game without colliding with Parker—although he did swat away a shot during a frenzied first-half defensive performance by the Mavericks.

San Antonio finished with its fewest points in a playoff game, while it was the fewest Dallas ever allowed in the postseason. The Mavericks improved to 16-1 at home since the All-Star break, and to 7-1 in games following 20-point losses.

Nowitzki had 20 points and seven rebounds, hitting the bench for good once Dallas' lead reached 30. Parker was San Antonio's leading scorer with just 12 points—down from 38 the previous game.

Dikembe Mutombo bids farewell after 18 seasons

HOUSTON (AP)—Dikembe Mutombo has gotten over the sadness of the end of his playing career. He'll take some time before deciding what he wants to do next.

The 42-year-old Mutombo said he was retired from basketball after rupturing a quadriceps tendon in his left knee early in Houston's 107-103 loss to Portland in Game 2 of their playoff series on Tuesday. Game 3 is Friday in Houston.

The 7-foot-2 Mutombo will have surgery on Monday. He limped around the Toyota Center on a crutch Thursday, but stayed upbeat as he chatted with reporters.

"I had a wonderful, wonderful ride," he said.

Mutombo said he would talk with his wife, Rose, and six children before deciding what he might do now. He's been active for years in humanitarian efforts, most of them benefiting causes in his native Africa. He was recognized in former President George W. Bush's 2007 State of the Union address and was invited to attend President

Barack Obama's inauguration in January.

Mutombo played for six teams, was the league's top defensive player four times and played in eight All-Star games over 18 seasons. He ranks 17th in rebounds (12,359) and finished with 3,289 career blocks, second to Hakeem Olajuwon (3,830). He followed most of his blocks with a playful wag of his right index finger, a gesture that became his enduring signature.

"This is a great day," he said. "Despite the bad news for myself, and what's going on with my knee, it is a good day to learn I have received another award, just to get another to my great collection. I'm just happy. I'm going to be all right."

Mutombo's most personal project is the Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital, which opened in December 2007, in his native Democratic Republic of Congo. Mutombo donated \$19 million and set up a foundation to raise money for the hospital, named after his

late mother.

He laughed off a question about whether he'd go to work for NBA commissioner David Stern, but wouldn't reveal any career paths he might have in mind.

"When the season is over, when everything is over, then I will have the time to reflect on myself and take time with my wife and kids," Mutombo said. "Then we will decide what the next chapter of life will be like. But right now, we still have basketball."

Mutombo had pondered retirement after last season, then re-signed with the Rockets on Dec. 31, seeing one last opportunity to win an NBA championship. He played in only nine games in the regular season, but continued to be a valuable role model for Houston's younger players, particularly Yao Ming.

"A great person, not just

on the court, but also off the court," Yao said. "He always took care of people. People know about his charities back in Africa. In the locker room, he always teaches the young guys to do the right thing."

Mutombo said the only regret of his long career was how it ended. He went down after tangling legs with Portland center Greg Oden and was taken away on a stretcher.

He had always envisioned walking proudly off the court in his final game.

"We don't have control of our destiny, we don't," he said. "You might be happy all day long and then you're walking along and you fall. If it was your time to go, you've got to go."

"I watched the replay and thought, 'How did it happen?'" he said. "But you have to accept the injury and you have to move on. I'm ready to move on."

NBA BRIEFS

Davidson's star Curry to enter NBA draft

DAVIDSON, N.C. (AP)—The big schools didn't want Stephen Curry, then were helpless in stopping his sweet-shooting stroke as he put tiny Davidson into the national spotlight. Now after three seasons and plenty of records, Curry is taking his game to the NBA, presenting more intrigue in how the skinny, baby-faced guard with the great genes will fare at the next level.

The nation's leading scorer announced at on-campus news conference Thursday that he's skipping his senior season to enter the NBA draft. His father, former NBA sharpshooter Dell Curry, attended the announcement, along with his mother, Sonya, and Davidson coach Bob McKillop. Curry said he will hire an agent, ending any chance that he'll return to campus and perhaps break Pete Maravich's NCAA Division I career scoring record. "I think I'm mentally and physically ready to make that jump," said Curry, who believes he'll be selected somewhere between seventh and 20th overall. "This is a dream of mine since I was a little kid."

The lightly recruited Curry burst onto the national scene a year ago in helping Davidson of the unheralded Southern Conference get within a missed a 3-pointer of the Final Four. The 6-foot-3 Curry moved to point guard this season and averaged 28.6 points. He had 15 games of 30 or more points and three of 40 or more as teams couldn't find a way to stop him.

UNC's Lawson, Ellington to enter NBA draft

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP)—North Carolina juniors Ty Lawson and Wayne Ellington will enter the NBA draft, ending their college careers a few weeks after leading the Tar Heels to the national championship.

Lawson and Ellington announced their plans at a news conference Thursday afternoon. Both players declared for the draft last year before ultimately deciding to return to school. Lawson was a second-team All-American and unseated Tyler Hansbrough as Atlantic Coast Conference player of the year. He was second on the team in scoring at nearly 17 points per game, and closed his career with 21 points and a championship game-record eight steals in the 89-72 win against Michigan State at Ford Field in Detroit. "It's hard to leave Carolina because of all the great memories and things you learn in college," Lawson said.

"All the fun I had with my teammates made it a hard decision. It's just tough leaving here," Ellington said. Both players declared for the draft last year before ultimately deciding to return to school. Lawson was a second-team All-American and unseated Tyler Hansbrough as Atlantic Coast Conference player of the year. He was second on the team in scoring at nearly 17 points per game, and closed his career with 21 points and a championship game-record eight steals in the 89-72 win against Michigan State at Ford Field in Detroit. "It's hard to leave Carolina because of all the great memories and things you learn in college," Lawson said.

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Falcons acquire Gonzalez from Chiefs



ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Falcons boosted their hopes for another trip to the playoffs by acquiring tight end Tony Gonzalez from the Kansas City Chiefs on Thursday for a draft pick next year.

The Chiefs insisted they also improved their chances for success in 2009 by making the trade.

The Falcons will send a second-round pick in 2010 to Kansas City in exchange for Gonzalez, the only tight end in NFL history selected to 10 Pro Bowls.

Gonzalez caught 96 passes for 1,058 yards and 10 touchdowns in 2008. He owns NFL career records for tight ends with 916 receptions, 10,940 yards receiving, 76 TDs receiving and 26 100-yard receiving games.

"It's somewhat bittersweet," Gonzalez told FoxSports.com. "I love Kansas City. I grew up in Kansas City. The city means a lot to me. I got there when I turned 21. It will be sad to leave a city I love. But I'm looking forward to making a Super Bowl run in Atlanta every year for the next three or four years."

Chiefs general manager Scott Pioli said it wasn't easy to trade the star, who played in 188 regular-season games for Kansas City.

"From an organizational as well as personal standpoint there are mixed emotions," Pioli said. "I have the highest personal and professional respect for Tony and consider him to be a future Pro Football Hall of Famer."

Pioli said the Chiefs, 2-14 in 2008, did not pursue a trade for Gonzalez, but agreed when the Falcons offered a second-round pick.

"This is something we really feel was a decision in the best short-term and long-term interest of the Chiefs," Pioli said, adding the 2010 draft pick could be used in another deal to acquire more picks in this weekend's draft.

"It may be that pick next year or it may be a pick this year or several picks," Pioli said.

Chiefs chairman Clark Hunt called Gonzalez "one of the finest players in Chiefs history."

Gonzalez will provide a dramatic new look for the Falcons, who were 11-5 last year with rookie quarterback Matt Ryan starting every game.

"Tony's arrival will make an instant impact not only on the offensive side of the ball, but on the overall team in general," said Ryan, the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year. "I feel privileged to be throwing the ball to a future Hall of Famer and I'm anxious to get on the field to start working with him."

Ryan has a new target and the Falcons have a new leader, but what about newly acquired Chiefs quarterback Matt Cassel? Pioli said there's still plen-



In this Dec. 7, 2008 file photo, Kansas City Chiefs tight end Tony Gonzalez looks for room to run after hauling in a pass against the Denver Broncos in the second quarter of an NFL football game in Denver.

Williams pleads guilty to traffic violations

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Chargers defensive tackle Jamal Williams pleaded guilty to two traffic violations on Thursday as part of a plea deal stemming from his arrest Feb. 1.

Williams had been arrested on suspicion of DUI, but the San Diego City Attorney's office decided to charge him with misdemeanor reckless driving after his blood-alcohol level showed 0.07 percent, under the state limit of 0.08.

In the plea deal, Williams pleaded guilty to a lane-change violation and speeding. He will pay a fine and take an eight-hour traffic safety class.

ty of time to bolster the Chiefs' offense before the season.

"There's a lot of time between now and then for us to continue to shape our roster," Pioli said.

When asked how he would replace Gonzalez, new Chiefs coach Todd Haley said, "I don't know I have a direct answer for that right now."

"This is what we felt was best for us right now all things considered," Haley added. "We're doing everything we can to give ourselves the best chance to win games in 2009 and that's

what we as a group felt was the best way to go."

The 33-year-old Gonzalez, who has three years remaining on his contract, asked to be traded last October. But then-general manager Carl Peterson said no team Gonzalez was willing to go to made a good enough offer.

The trade addresses one of the Falcons' top needs, freeing the organization to make defense the top priority in this weekend's draft.

The Falcons expect to receive compensatory picks next year

for losing several free agents, including cornerback Domonique Foxworth and linebackers Michael Boley and Keith Brooking, making it easier for the team to trade the second-round pick to the Chiefs.

Gonzalez will join Pro Bowl receiver Roddy White to give the Falcons more passing balance.

"With Matt Ryan, Michael Turner, Roddy White and now myself, we have the chance to be in the top five in the league in offense every year," Gonzalez said. "How could I not be excited to join that team?"

Before making the trade, Falcons general manager Thomas Dimitroff said, "Every team in this league dreams of having Tony Gonzalez run out of the tunnel for them."

After realizing that dream, Dimitroff said Gonzalez will add "a new dynamic to the Falcons' offense."

"His career numbers and records are top-notch and he will no doubt be an integral part of our offense," Dimitroff said.

The Falcons said Gonzalez will be in Atlanta for a news conference on Friday.

Sizemore's homer leads Indians over Royals



CLEVELAND

(AP)—Grady Sizemore

greeted reliever Ron Mahay with a tiebreaking, three-run homer in the eighth inning Thursday and the Cleveland Indians beat the Kansas City Royals 5-2.

Royals starter Gil Meche (1-1) had retired 16 straight batters and took a 2-1 lead into the eighth. An error by second baseman Alberto Callaspo let the tying run score and finished Meche.

Sizemore followed with his sixth home run.

Jensen Lewis (2-2) worked two scoreless innings. Kerry Wood pitched a perfect ninth for his third save in as many chances.

Plate umpire John Hirschbeck was examined in the sixth after getting hit in the mask by Mike Aviles' foul ball. Hirschbeck dropped to one knee, but stayed in the game. Hirschbeck was struck in the mask three times and once in the foot during the day.

Mariners 1, Rays 0

SEATTLE (AP)—Ichiro Suzuki lined James Shields' second pitch of the game for a home run and ace Felix Hernandez helped his injury riddled team with a seven-inning gem.

David Aardsma pitched a perfect eighth with two strikeouts. Brandon Morrow worked out of a jam in the ninth for his fifth save in five chances, as the first-place Mariners finished their initial homestand of the season 5-4.

Hernandez (3-0) allowed four hits and three walks while striking out seven in his first scoreless outing since June 6 at Boston—23 starts ago.

Orioles 6, White Sox 2

BALTIMORE (AP)—Adam Eaton took a four-hitter into the eighth inning to earn his first victory with Baltimore, and the Orioles roughed up Bartolo Colon.

Eaton (1-2) allowed six hits, struck out nine and walked none in 7 1-3 innings. The right-hander left with runners at the corners in the eighth, and Jim Thome ruined the shutout bid with a two-out, two-run single off Jim Johnson.

Blue Jays 5, Rangers 2

TORONTO (AP)—Alex Rios hit a two-run homer, Vernon Wells and Lyle Overbay also connected and the Blue Jays beat Texas.

Josh Hamilton and Chris Davis hit solo shots for Texas, with six of the game's seven runs coming on homers.

Blue Jays right-hander Scott Richmond (2-0) won back-to-back starts for the first time, allowing two runs and six hits in six innings. He walked two and struck out a career-high eight.

Angels 10, Tigers 5

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Matt Palmer pitched into the seventh inning to earn his first major league victory, Torii Hunter hit a go-ahead

home run and the Angels beat Detroit.

Palmer (1-0) threw 100 pitches in six-plus innings in his fourth big league start. He was charged with five runs—four earned—and six hits, walking three and striking out one. After giving up a leadoff homer to Brandon Inge in the second, the 30-year-old right-hander allowed two more singles in the inning before retiring his next 12 batters.

Brewers 6, Phillies 1

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Dave Bush held Philadelphia hitless for 7 1-3 innings before pinch-hitter Matt Stairs homered off the foul pole, and the Milwaukee Brewers beat the Phillies.

Several innings after World Series MVP Cole Hamels was forced to leave after getting hit in the left shoulder by Prince Fielder's line drive, Bush (1-0) became the big story on the mound.

Bush was the sixth pitcher to take a no-hit bid into the late innings this season. All of them got broken up.

Cardinals 12, Mets 8

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Albert Pujols homered twice and Kyle Lohse hung on for another win as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the New York Mets to complete a three-game sweep.

Rick Ankiel homered and doubled twice and Skip Schumaker hit a pair of RBI doubles as the Cardinals punished Livan Hernandez and won their seventh in a row at home. The Mets lost their fourth straight overall.

St. Louis led 11-3 after six innings en route to sweeping the Mets in a three-game series at home for the first time since Aug. 6-8, 2004. Pujols had three hits and scored four times.

Reds 7, Cubs 1

CHICAGO (AP)—Aaron Harang allowed only one unearned run over seven innings and Joey Votto homered, doubled twice and singled, leading the Cincinnati Reds over the sloppy Chicago Cubs.

The Reds went 7-3 on their first road swing of the season, marking the first time since 2004 they'd won three series on the same trip.

Harang (2-2) scattered seven hits in outpitching Cubs ace Carlos Zambrano (1-1), who hasn't won at Wrigley Field since last Aug. 21. Harang walked one and struck out two, including his 1,000th career strikeout.

Dodgers 2, Astros 0

Houston (AP)—Chad Billingsley pitched three-hit ball into the eighth inning and Manny Ramirez and Casey Blake each drove in a run, leading the Dodgers over the Astros.

Billingsley (4-0) has won his first four starts of the season, the first Dodgers pitcher to do so since Kazuhisa Ishii won his first six in 2002.

He was helped by double plays that ended the second, fifth and sixth innings.

 **TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES**
MLB STANDINGS**AMERICAN LEAGUE****East Division**

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	12	5	.706	-
Boston	9	6	.600	2
New York	9	6	.600	2
Baltimore	8	8	.500	3 1/2
Tampa Bay	6	10	.375	5 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	8	7	.533	-
Detroit	8	7	.533	-
Kansas City	8	7	.533	-
Minnesota	7	9	.438	1 1/2
Cleveland	6	10	.375	2 1/2

West Division

Seattle	10	6	.625	-
Los Angeles	6	9	.400	3 1/2
Texas	6	9	.400	3 1/2
Oakland	5	9	.357	4

NATIONAL LEAGUE**East Division**

Florida	11	4	.733	-
Atlanta	7	8	.467	4
Philadelphia	6	8	.429	4 1/2
New York	6	9	.400	5
Washington	3	11	.214	7 1/2

Central Division

St. Louis	11	5	.688	-
Cincinnati	9	6	.600	1 1/2
Pittsburgh	9	6	.600	1 1/2
Chicago	8	6	.571	2
Milwaukee	6	9	.400	4 1/2
Houston	6	10	.375	5

West Division

Los Angeles	11	5	.688	-
San Diego	9	6	.600	1 1/2
San Francisco	6	8	.429	4
Arizona	6	9	.400	4 1/2
Colorado	5	9	.357	5

Yesterday's Games

Milwaukee 6, Philadelphia 1
St. Louis 12, N.Y. Mets 8
Cincinnati 7, Chicago Cubs 1
L.A. Dodgers 2, Houston 0
Cleveland 5, Kansas City 2
Seattle 1, Tampa Bay 0
Baltimore 6, Chicago White Sox 2
Toronto 5, Texas 2
L.A. Angels 10, Detroit 5

ZURICH CLASSIC SCORES**FIRST ROUND**

Charlie Wi	66
Jay Williamson	67
Nathan Green	67
Parker McLachlin	67
John Merrick	67
Charles Warren	67
Eric Axley	67
Martin Laird	68
Jeff Overton	68
Charles Howell III	68
Steve Stricker	68
Rod Pampling	68
Justin Rose	68
Jason Dufner	68
Jerry Kelly	68
David Toms	68
Ryan Moore	68
Roland Thatcher	68
Michael Bradley	69
George McNeill	69
Brad Faxon	69
Greg Chalmers	69
John Rollins	69
Jarrod Lyle	69
D.A. Points	69
Jason Day	69
Kenny Perry	69
Charley Hoffman	69
Y.E. Yang	69
Paul Goydos	69
John Mallinger	70
Brian Davis	70
Tim Petrovic	70
Rory Sabbatini	70
Ryan Palmer	70
Lee Janzen	70
Rich Beem	70
Matthew Borchert	70
Steve Marino	70
Aaron Watkins	70
Jimmy Walker	70
David Bergano Jr.	70
Spencer Levin	70
John Senden	70
Dudley Hart	70
Webb Simpson	70
Scott Verplank	70

By The Associated Press

NOBLE

From Page 28

Harayuki Tsuji, Seok-Min Lim, Bym-Suk Lee, Tae-Ok Park, Fred Camacho, Florian Braig, Kevin Carey, Matthew Mancao, Lewie Tenorio, Kimiko Hasegawa, Ronald Villafria, Shogo Ando, Nate Hawley, Susan

Blackett, Cho Ka-On, Teishi Kishii, Hideaki Urya, Nasahiro Otani, Terukazo Obata, Yukimari Shimohata, Shigamasa Uda, Kineo Takahiro, Hiroshi Kishibe, Miyuki Fujita, Akihiko Sugiura, Brad Ruzala, and Angelo Villagomez.

A side event for the Tagaman is the Taga Kids Triathlon set during the same morning at the AMP.

SPORTS

Budweiser softball playoffs postponed

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



To give way to the Flame Tree Festival, organizers have decided to postpone the ongoing playoffs of the 2009 Budweiser Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League.

The loser's bracket game scheduled last Thursday night between defending champion Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and Freedom Air was cancelled to give the players

a chance to join the festivities.

The game will be played starting at 7:30pm next Monday, April 27, that would also give fans a chance to watch the game at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Freedom Air defeated Joeten Motor Jets, 23-9, last Wednesday night to arrange a semifinal showdown with DCCA.

The winner between DCCA and Freedom Air will earn the right to face the Beach Boys in the finals.

In a stunning reversal of fortunes Wednesday night, the Beach Boys defeated DCCA, 20-7, via 10-run mercy rule and gained a twice-to-beat ad-

vantage in the championship match, which could have been played last night.

The championship game has been set for next Thursday, April 30, both for the women's and men's divisions.

Northern Marianas College will clash with Finance at 6:30pm for the women's finals, with Finance having the twice-to-beat incentive.

Then the men's finals between the Beach Boys and whichever team wins between DCCA and Freedom Air will start at 7:30pm.

DCCA's loss to the Beach Boys snapped a 21-game winning streak and they were sent

to the loser's bracket.

They still have the chance to retain the title but they need to restore their confidence when they meet an equally dangerous opponent in Freedom Air.

RGA April Ace this Sunday



The Refaluwasch Golf Association will hold its April Ace of the Month Tournament this Sunday, April 26, at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Check in time is 11am with tee off set an hour later at 12pm at the Agingan Point golf course.

Score to beat is the net 71 carded by Rey Tigilau in RGA's monthly qualifier two weekends ago.

In related news, RGA tournament coordinator Jess Wabol is encouraging current and past members to pay the club's annual membership fee, which will remain at \$25 because of the current economic crisis.

For more information about RGA's April Ace of the Month tourney and the rest of its tournaments for 2009, contact president Jordan Kosam at 483-4506 or Wabol at 288-1129. (PR)



Saipan received some exceptional regional exposure when ABS-CBN ran a story on Eduard "The Landslide" Foloyang's recent win in Gorilla Warfare's much lauded "Battle Ready" event.

Foloyang's victory over Jerome Norita of Marianas Elite was aired on The Filipino Channel this past weekend along with a story featuring the trip by he and the URCC (Universal Reality Combat Challenge) husband-and-wife team of Alvin and Bubbles Aguilar.

The broadcast noted that Foloyang made positive waves in the local Filipino community as well as captured the respect of local fight fans and fighters alike.

"It was my first time to come to Saipan and I am very happy to be here. I just want to put on a great show. Everyone here has been very nice and welcoming," Said Foloyang prior to his fight against Norita.

Foloyang incidentally won his welterweight match against Norita via a first round technical knockout.

Many in the local Filipino community were excited upon

MP UNITED

From Page 28

and U10 age groups have co-ed teams, while U13 and U18 have separate competition for boys and

girls. Around 500 kids are playing in the youth league,

The league will continue its regular season game for another month before concluding the competition with a youth football festival in May.

TINIAN'S

From Page 28

in Rota in November, improving his time. And after the Saipan Marathon in January 2009, the local XTERRA race was a natural choice for Manglona.

But the grueling course proved to be a major challenge. Manglona finished second in the 20-24 age division, completing the crown jewel of the XTERRA Global Tour in four hours and 40 minutes. The first place spot in the 20-24 age division went to Quincy Johnson,

who timed in at four hours and 23 minutes.

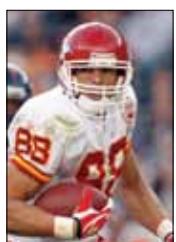
Manglona said the whole XTERRA Saipan experience was equal parts pain and fun.

"I loved XTERRA. It was a really, really hard challenge. I had a lot of fun. The best parts were probably crashing four times on the bike route. Those four crashes were pretty brutal. I remember losing control of my bike and flying off my bike. Basically I remember flipping and hitting the ground so hard. But these showed me that I can endure the extreme course of the bike trail. There were cuts and

(.450), Shell's Philip Sablan (.450), Little Lions' Catalina Dela Cruz (.450), Braves' Roy Tudela (.450), Hustlers' Khobby Kaipat (.444), Enforcers' Cedric Camacho (.435), and Survivors' Caleb Takao (.429).

The Jets' Lizama is running second in pitching with 0.40, while the Hustlers' Saralu is third (0.67).

Other ERA leaders are Survivors' Gayvan Uchao (1.13), Takao (1.22), Cabrera (1.23), M.J. Aldan (1.42), Red Sox's Keene Guerrero (1.59),



Falcons acquire Gonzalez from Chiefs

The Atlanta Falcons boosted their hopes for another trip to the playoffs by acquiring tight end Tony Gonzalez from the Kansas City Chiefs on Thursday for a draft pick next year.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

28 SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2009

SAIPAN TRIBUNE



Boozer leads Jazz back into series vs Lakers

Deron Williams hit a fadeaway jumper with 2.2 seconds left to give Utah an 88-86 win over the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night, getting the Jazz back into the first-round playoff series.

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Noble, Bucher stake PIC Double titles

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Andrew Noble of Australia and Renata Bucher of Switzerland will lead a cast of 50 individual entries for this morning's 20th Tagaman Triathlon. Noble won the men's title last year on the way to taking the Pacific Islands Club Double, while Bucher is the women's defending champion in both the Tagaman and the PIC Double.

Sam Gardner of Great Britain will be out to challenge Noble.

Gardner ran away with the crown in the 8th Annual Xterra Saipan Championship and ousted 2008 winner Noble, who settled for fourth place.

TAGAMAN
20th TAGAMAN TRIATHLON
2009

But the course this time is an entirely different matter and will be a tougher challenge not only for both Gardner and Noble, but also for other triathletes in the field.

Two other pros will have their chance for a taste of the limelight—Jim McConnel of Great Britain and Arland Macasieb of the Philippines.

The race will start with a 2-kilometer swim at the back of PIC.

For the 60-km bike, competitors will go up to Koblerville and back to



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
Jose Lizama Jr. played catcher in the Jets' Major Division game against the Athletics last Saturday in the Saipan Little League.

Jets' Lizama leads Majors in batting

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Jose Lizama Jr. regained the lead in batting average in the Majors Division of the 2009 Saipan Little League based on the latest individual statistics.

The Jets all-around player averaged .538 by hitting 14-for-26 at bat.

Included in the Top 15 are players with 20 or more at bats.

See JETS on Page 27



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Australia's Andrew Noble pushes his bike in one of the difficult portions of the bike race during the 8th Annual Xterra Saipan Championship last Saturday, while Switzerland's Renata Bucher, right, pedals her way to the bushes on the slopes of Mt. Tapochao.

The run will start and finish at Micro Beach.

In the women's side, five-time Xterra Saipan champion Bucher is expected to make it a one-sided race, as archrival Julie Dibens of the U.K. and U.S. Xterra champion Shonny Vanlandingham are out of the race due to other commitments.

The only other pro woman entered for the Tagaman is Saipan resident Mieko Carey, who was injured on the

bike while going down Mt. Tapochao in last week's Xterra Saipan.

Other triathletes taking part in the longest-running triathlon event in the region are Yu-Hun Park, Albert Anton, Ben Distel, Allan Collinson, Daisuke Kawabata, Masami Okada, Tyce Mister, Arakawa Saburo, Joshua Berger, Julia Lendvai, Manny Sitchon, Stan Good, Kanichi Yoka, Akio Matsuura, Noriko Takano, Kiyoko Kawamura,

See NOBLE on Page 27

Tinian's Manglona is driven to succeed



TINIAN—Tinian triathlete Joshua A. Manglona completed the 8th Xterra Saipan Championship last Saturday, and is preparing for this morning's 20th staging of the Tagaman Triathlon.

Since his first triathlon in June 2008, nearly one year ago, Manglona, 21, has launched onto the amateur athlete scene with gusto. He competed in a second triathlon

See TINIAN'S on Page 27



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tinian's Joshua Manglona catches his breath after crossing the finish line of the 8th Annual Xterra Saipan Championship last Saturday at Micro Beach. He came in with a time of four hours and 40 minutes.

MP United sweep U13 games, Paire wins in U18

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

MP United went perfect in U13 games in the 2009 NMIFA Spring Youth Football League last Saturday.

MP United 1 blanked Tan Holdings FC, 2-0, on one goal apiece from Dakota Hall (43rd minute) and Aifferson Atan (46th minute).

In the other boys' U13 match, MP United 2 also had a shutout win over Independents FC 1, 3-0. Angelo Jones tallied two goals for MP United 2, while Jake Lee made one.

MP United 3 was to play IFC 2 in the third game, but IFC is now down to only one team in the boys' U13 division. MP United 3 was then allowed to challenge a collection of league players in a scrimmage with MP strikers prevailing, 2-0.

In other results in the boys' U13, Paire FC and Matansa went neck-and-neck in the entire game and had to settle for a 0-0 draw.

Paire coordinator Becca Newman



MP United 2's Angelo Jones keeps the ball in play in one of their games in the boys' U13 division of the 2009 NMIFA Spring Youth Football League at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

said there were a lot of attempts for a goal, but Paire keeper Lucas Nutting and his counterpart at Matansa held

their ground to end the game in a tie.

In the girls' U13, IFC 2 and Matansa had a 1-1 draw with Nancy Oscar scor-

ing for the former in the 22nd minute and Doreen Ravell making a goal for the latter in the 35th minute.

In the boys' U18 division, Paire outclassed Matansa, 1-0. Andres Halaby scored the lone goal of the game in the 19th minute.

MP United 1 and IFC 1 dueled in the other boys' U18 game and both teams scored one goal for a draw. Dae Min Jeon nailed the lone goal for MP United 1.

The girls' U18 game between MPU and Paire also ended in a draw, as neither team scored.

"There were a lot of good plays and several opportunities to score, but Paire's Stephanie Camacho and MPU goalkeepers and both teams defenders hung in there for a 0-0 draw," Newman said.

The spring youth league also holds games in four other age groups, namely U4, U6, U8, and U10. The U4, U6, U8,

See MP UNITED on Page 27